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ABSTRACT

"Speak Out for Children" is the quarterly newsletter of the Children's Rights Council (CRC), which is concerned with the healthy development of children of divorced and separated parents. The newsletter consists of feature articles and regular sections and columns. Feature articles for volume 11, issue number 1, are: "U.S. Commission Supports More Mediation, Unified Courts, Parenting Plans"; and "Joint Custody Favorable for Children, says APA [American Psychological Association] group." Feature article for issue number 2 of this volume is: "Presumption for Joint Custody Takes Effect in Washington, D.C." The feature article for issue number 3 is "Landmark Divorce Study Had the Numbers Wrong" (Katharine Webster). Regular departments in the newsletter include "Family Facts," "In the Courts," "Bills and Resolutions in Congress," "Chapter News," and "Around the Country." (HTH)

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Assisting Children of Separation and Divorce

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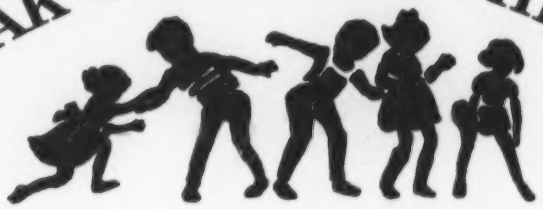

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IN THIS ISSUE:

U.S. Commission Supports More Mediation. 1
About CRC 2
Action Alert 3
10th Conference 4
Child Support Owed 5
CRC's 10th Anniversary 6
Conference 96 7
Conference 96 Awards/Raffle 8
Family Facts 9
Bills and Resolutions 10
In the Courts 13
Around the Country 14
Chapter News 15
Inside CRC 16
Chapters 17
Thank You 18
Catalog of Resources 19

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U.S. Commission Supports More Mediation, Unified Courts, Parenting Plans

Guidubaldi

Harrington

The U.S. Commission on Child and Family Welfare has concluded its nine months of hearings and deliberations with recommendations to Congress aimed at demilitarizing divorce and strengthening families.

Those recommendations include:

* mediation should be required in most cases involving child custody;
* parenting plans should be required for separating, divorcing or unmarried parents;
* unified court systems should be established in the states to deal with all aspects of family matters; and
* the terms "custody" and "visitation" should be replaced with terms that describe parenting responsibilities such as "parental decision-making", "parenting time", and "residential arrangements" for minor children.

Commissioners John Guidubaldi, Ph.D., of John Carroll and Kent State Universities in Ohio, and Bill Harrington, of Takoma, Washington, president of the American Fathers Alliance, who led the fight to get these recommendations approved, called these proposals to Congress "important breakthroughs for families."

(Continued on page 3)

Joint Custody Favorable for Children, says APA Group

A review of the major research on joint custody by a division of the prestigious American Psychological Association (APA) shows "favorable outcomes" for children who experience joint custody.

Joint custody resulted in

* increased father involvement with children,
* adolescents' positive adjustment (best interest of the child standard),
* increased child support compliance,
* less relitigation and reduced costs for the family; and
* reduction of parental conflict,

said Division 16 (School Psychology) of the APA.

The evaluation by Division 16 was conducted at the request of John Guidubaldi,Ph.D,

(Continued on page 5)

Attend CRC's 10th National Conference April 24-28, 1996
at the luxurious Crowne Plaza Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia

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"Speak Out for Children" is published by the Children's Rights Council, Inc. Editor: David L. Levy. Contributors to this Issue: Harvey Walden, Don Bieniewicz; college student interns Carolyn Dumas, University of New Hampshire, and Jessica Fredette, St. Anselm's College. Newsletter layout by Shari Sternberg.

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CHILDREN'S CHARITIES of AMERICA

About CRC

The Children's Rights Council (CRC) is a nation–wide, non–profit IRS 501(c)(3) children's rights organization based in Washington, DC.

CRC works to strengthen families through education and advocacy. We favor family formation and family preservation, but if families break up, or are never formed, we work to assure a child the frequent and continuing contact with two parents and extended family the child would normally have during a marriage. Our motto is "The Best Parent is Both Parents."

For the child's benefit, CRC favors parenting education before marriage, during marriage, and in the event of separation. We work to demilitarize divorce between parents who are involved in marital disputes, substituting conciliation and mediation for the adversarial process, and providing for comprehensive child support. We also favor school–based programs for children at risk.

Formed in 1985 by concerned parents who have more than 40 years collective experience in divorce reform and early childhood education, CRC has chapters in 30 states and three national affiliate organizations: Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC), Parents Without Partners (PWP), and the Stepfamily Association of America (SAA).

Prominent professionals in the fields of religion, law, social work, psychology, child care, education, business, and government comprise our Advisory Panel.

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For further information about membership, publications, cassettes, catalog and services, write: CRC, 220 "I" Street N.E., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20002; phone (202) 547–6227; fax (202) 546–4CRC (4272).

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(Continued from page 1)

Guidubaldi and Harrington, who were both appointed by former House Speaker Foley to the Commission, also fought hard to get the Commission to adopt a recommendation in favor of a presumption for joint custody.

The Commission decided not to make any recommendation on custody determinations, which Guidubaldi and Harrington criticized as an avoidance of the main reason the Commission was established—to make recommendations in the custody as well as in the visitation area. However, David Arnaudo, an official in the Child Support Office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) who oversees the access/visitation grants awarded to seven states as a result of Congressional action in 1988, called the recommendations "significant. Guidubaldi and Harrington got the Commission to adopt almost everything they recommended, and that is quite important," said Arnaudo.

The commission recommended requiring mediation in contested domestic relations cases except in instances involving domestic abuse, substance abuse, mental impairment and/or other characteristics of the litigants that would make mediation inadvisable or that could preclude a fair mediation process.

The recommendations of the Commission are expected to be made available before the end of 1995. Copies are available by phoning (202) 401-9383. Congress will decide whether to enact certain recommendations into federal law, and whether to recommend that the states adopt other recommendations.

Guidubaldi and Harrington plan to file minority reports, particularly about the failure of the Commission to adopt a recommendation in favor of joint custody.

Other Recommendations

The Commission said that:

A) The federal government and other research funding sources should sponsor research and disseminate findings on such important issues as 1) what makes a successful marriage, 2) the causes of divorce, 3) the effects of different parenting arrangements on children, 4) the impact of divorce on the well-being of children, 5) flaws in the current legal process of divorce, and 6) the impact of being born to unmarried parents on the well-being of children;

B) Public and private efforts should be made to improve the training of lawyers in family law and to increase their availability for pro-bono work;

C) Strengthening the Family and the Community is possible through a variety of education and pre-marital counseling programs to prepare people for marriage on issues such as parenting skills and conflict resolution, and other programs;

D) Religious institutions should join with other community-based groups to make available information about the positive impact of two-parent involvement on children;

E) Businesses should devise family friendly policies; and

F) States should encourage extensive use of public schools as a meeting place for parent groups and be a catalyst for wider-based community efforts to strengthen families.

ACTION ALERT!!! ACTION ALERT!!! ACTION ALERT!!!

Write to your U.S. Representative and two U.S. Senators, informing them about defective child support provisions in the Welfare Reform bill. See Numbers 1, 2, and 3 on page 10.

You can use essentially the same words as are used on page 10. With all the mail your Congresspersons get, they need to get many letters telling them about these items before these issues register on their Congressional Radar.

Write to House members at:

Representative ——
(name of your Representative)
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator —— (name of your Senator)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear —— (name)

In the welfare reform bill, Congress is requiring the states to adopt the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA). Congress is under the mistaken impression that it is non-custodial parents who generally move out of state. Not so. In the majority of cases, it is the custodial parent who moves out of state. (Then pick up the rest of #1 on page 10).

Sincerely yours,
Your name and address

In a separate letter (or in the same letter), write about #2 from page 10.

Dear — (name)

In the welfare reform bill, Congress is requiring the states to revoke all licenses of any obligor (non-custodial) parent who is 90 days or more behind in his or child support. (pick up rest of #2 on page 10).

Sincerely yours,
Your name and address

In a separate letter (or in the same letter), write about #3 from page 10.

Dear — (name)

In the welfare reform bill, Congress is requiring mandatory wage withholding and W-4 tracking through employers. (pick up rest of #3 on page 10)

Sincerely yours,
Your name and address

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CEUs and CLEs are available for those attending (details will be provided at the conference). Plus: 100 pages of handouts for use by parents, professionals, and policymakers.

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April 24 to 28, 1996
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For more info, call (202) 547-6227. To register fast by credit card, fax this form to (202) 546-4272. Fee includes Author Luncheon, Banquet, Sock Hop, and Candlelight Vigil near Olympic Stadium.

Registration Fee	CRC Member	Non-Member
Received by March 24	$155.00	$190.00*
After March 24	175.00	210.00*
Single Day	75.00	

* Includes one-year membership of $35 in CRC.
80% Refund if cancellation by April 1, 1996.
50% Refund if cancellation by April 15, 1996.

Bonus for paid registrants:

❑ Check here if you would like a a free copy of CRC's book, *The Best Parent is Both Parents*. (A $10 value.)

$5 Billion, Not $34 Billion Child Support Owed Each Year

Many people have heard the report that supposedly $34 billion per year is owed in court-ordered child support. Everyone familiar with the research on child support has known that figure is incorrect.

The author of that figure, Elaine Sorensen, a senior research associate at the Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., has orally stated that the $34 billion was only meant to be a hypothetical figure of what could be collected in child support if every man had only one child, was fully employed, and paid child support based on the highest child support guidelines in the country.

Nevertheless, members of Congress, President Clinton, and the media, have picked up the $34 billion figure as a reality and stated that this is what is owed in court-ordered child support.

For the first time in print, Dr. Sorensen said unequivocally that the actual amount of child support that is owed is more than $5 billion.

In an article in the Washington Post, Page A25, November 11, 1995, Dr. Sorensen said "The latest census figures show that 'deadbeat dads' owe more than $5 billion in child support to 2.3 billion custodial mothers and their children."

This approximate $5 billion figure is also confirmed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) 18th Annual Report to Congress, issued in 1995. Sorensen also said in the article that "There is also is a reluctance to reduce child support orders. According to U.S. census data, only 4 percent of non-custodial fathers who were paying child support under an order received a downward adjustment when their earnings fell by more than 15 percent between one year and the next."

Downward modifications as well as upward modifications are authorized by the 1988 Family Support Act when there is a "material change of circumstances."

Joint Custody Favorable for Children

(Continued from page 1)

a member of the National Commission on Child and Family Welfare, in the hope that a thoughtful review of the research might convince the U.S. Commission on Child and Family Welfare, of which Guidubaldi is a member, to recommend a presumption of joint custody.

The Commission did not deal with the subject of joint custody in its final report (see related story in this issue), "but the survey is increasing the understanding by parents and professionals of the value of including both fathers and mothers in post-divorce arrangements," said Guidubaldi.

The survey, released June 14, 1995, is not based on anecdotes or self-serving questionnaires, but is "a comparison of joint custody with sole custody for children," noted Guidubaldi.

Survey Findings

The APA survey found that:

* "The weight of evidence from the studies reviewed unambiguously found increased father contact and involvement with children in joint custody versus sole maternal custody families of divorce (Albiston, Maccoby & Mnookin, 1990; Arditti, 1992)" and other studies.
* "The two studies with the best methodology (Buchanan, Maccoby, & Dornbush, 1991; Burnett, 1991) indicated that joint custody versus sole maternal custody was associated with adolescents' positive adjustment. This finding was replicated for children by Abarbanel (1979), Greif (1979) and Luepnitz (1986) but not Johnston, Kline & Tschann (1989) and Kline, Tschann, Johnston & Wallerstein (1989). It is concluded that the present research supports joint custody for facilitating children's adjustment."

"The above conclusion is supported by the more generalized research with optimal methodology concerning children's divorce adjustment. Several studies found that increased and reliable visitation by the non-custodial parent (usually the father) predicted positive adjustment of children (e.g., Guidubaldi, Cleminshaw, Perry & Nastasi, 1984; Hetherington, Cox &Cox, 1982; and Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980)."

* The consensus of studies that addressed the issue of child support found that child support to mothers is either increased in joint custody families or not significantly different from those with sole maternal custody;
* The emotional and financial relitigation costs to families and judicial systems is often cited by proponents and opponents regarding joint custody. The studies reviewed that investigated this issue consistently indicated decreased relitigation for joint custody versus sole maternal custody.
* "The replicated finding and the weight of evidence were that joint custody results in either less or no greater conflict than in sole maternal custody. The sole exception to these findings was by Johnston, Kline and Tschann (1989) but as Ferreiro (1990) pointed out, this study included a biased sample of divorced families referred due to high conflict."

Data Misinterpreted

The survey quoted Joan Berlin Kelly, Ph.D., co-author of "Surviving the Break-Up" as stating that the misinterpretation of research conclusions could be due to political distortion as reflected by the following statement by Kelly:

"The current practice of feminist writers and fathers' rights groups to use a particular research finding to bolster a political or gender-linked point of view while ignoring other data makes it difficult for legislators, judges, attorneys or parents to obtain a balanced informed view."

Kelly recommended joint custody, however, "for increasing the access of both parents which has consistently been shown to promote positive adjustment of children."

The authors of the APA report call for "improved policy to reduce the present adversarial approach that has resulted in primarily sole maternal custody, limited father involvement and maladjustment of both children and parents. Increased mediation, joint custody and parent education are supported."

CRC's 10th Anniversary Launches "2 Parents by 2000" Drive

Koujachji, Starke, Moran, Barry, and Levy at CRC's 10th Anniversary Dinner

Political leaders, sports figures and 100 CRC supporters attended CRC's 10th anniversary dinner at the Marrakesh (Middle Eastern) Restaurant in Washington, D.C. on November 9, 1995.

Congressman Jim Moran (D–VA), Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry, D.C. Councilman Harold Brazil, and Redskins Superbowl Champions Darryl Grant and George Starke attended the event.

They spoke about children, CRC, and the successes CRC has had over the years in Congress, the courts, state legislatures, and in helping to awaken people to the acknowledgement that children need, want, and love two parents.

"CRC has accomplished some of its goals, yet America is in family crisis," said CRC President David L. Levy at the event.

Levy announced a new CRC initiative, "2 Parents by 2000", a drive to assure that all children in America have two parents by the year 2000.

"Single parents do all they can for their children in a difficult situation, and many children of single parents turn out fine, but children with two parents generally do better in school, have higher self–esteem, and avoid drugs and crime more than children raised by single parents," said Levy.

CRC plans, with its chapters, to hold a series of town–hall meetings to form a grass–roots effort to promote the "2 Parents by 2000" drive.

Moran, Barry, Brazil, Grant and Starke were honorary hosts of CRC's 10th anniversary event. Honorary hosts also included sports team owner and philanthropist Abe Pollin, U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes (D–MD), Governor Parris Glendening (D–MD), Congressman Albert Wynn (D–MD), and child activist Susan DeConcini.

The Marrakesh Restaurant was chosen for the event, because its owner, Bashir Koujachji, has spoken out in favor of the two–parent family in newspaper ads and in other forums.

Announcements

National Conference for Fathers and Children

The National Conference for Fathers and Children (NCFC) will hold its 12th annual convention at the Holiday Inn Holidome in Kansas City, KS, August 8–11, 1996. For conference registrations, phone NCFC at 1–800–733–DADS. The educational conference will focus on the needs of fathers, on improving attorneys' representation for fathers; and second wives. The room rate for conference registrants at the hotel is $65; up to four persons may share a room; phone the hotel at 1–800–527–0582. Childcare will be available at the family–friendly Holidome.

Parents Without Partners

Parents Without Partners (PWP) will hold its 37th International Convention July 2–7, 1996 at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn, Dearborn, Michigan. Workshops, speakers, social activities, and entertaining youth program, will highlight the convention. For information, contact PWP at 401 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611, phone (312) 644–6610.

Stepfamily Association of America

The Stepfamily Association of America (SAA) will hold a Western Regional Conference in San Diego, CA on Feb. 3–4, 1996. The conference rate starts at $30. per person; extra fees for workshops and luncheons. To register, contact Emily Visher (510) 284–5204, Kim Matthews (408) 749–1580, or Gloria Clark, (412) 361–6767. Speakers will include authors and SAA founders Emily and John Visher. For hotel conference rate of $74. per night, phone the hotel at 1–800–882–0858, and mention the SAA conference.

CRC Guideline Available

Copies of the model child support guideline prepared by CRC that is based on a child having two parents are still available from the federal government.

This is the first time that the federal government has ever distributed a guideline that takes into account the direct expenditures on a child by the non–custodial parent.

To obtain a copy of the federal publication, phone (202) 401–9383, which is the Office of Child Support Enforcement's Child Support Reference Center, located at 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW, Washington, D.C. 20447. There is no charge for the publication, entitled "Child Support Guidelines: The Next Generation", as long as supplies last.

Copies of the guideline itself as published by the government are available from CRC for $5.00 for CRC members, and $10.00 for non–members, including shipping and handling.

If you would like to contact Don Bieniewicz, author of the guideline, for his assistance in getting this guideline adopted in the states, write him at 10004 Fairoaks Road, Vienna, VA 22181, or phone 703–255–0837 (evenings).

Change of Address

To keep newsletters and other materials coming, please notify CRC three weeks in advance of any address change. Send old and new addresses to CRC, 220 "I" Street N.E., Suite 200, Washington. DC 20002.

Donors are Appreciated

CRC thanks everyone who contributed to CRC in the charity drive that took place in all federal government offices in the Fall of 1995.

CRC is listed as number 1513 in the Children's Charities of America listing, which is part of the Independent Charities of America. We also thank those who contribute to CRC in the Washington, D.C., and San Francisco (Bay Area) United Way campaigns.

We also thank those who contribute to CRC through their United Way in some other part of the country, where we are not listed, but where employers may sometimes allow employees to designate CRC.

CRC also appreciates all those who contribute to CRC through the Global Focus credit card campaign run by MBNA American Bank, in Newark, Delaware. CRC depends on volunteer help and contributions for its existence.

If you wish to make your tax-deductible contribution direct to CRC, send it to CRC, 220 "I" Street, Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20002

Intellectual Property Protection

Charlie Ruggiero, who obtained trademark protection for the name and logo "Children's Rights Council" and the name and logo for our newsletter "Speak Out for Children" is a specialist in trademark, patent, copyright, and licensing law. He is a partner in the law firm of Ohlandt, Greeley and Ruggiero, 1 Landmark Square, Suite 903, Stamford, CT 06901, telephone (203) 327-6067.

Helping Kids Materials

The Bureau For At-Risk Youth is offering free its new 80 page buyer's Guide with hundreds of award-winning videos, posters, and prevention programs for parents, educators, counselors and other professional youth workers.

To receive a free copy of the Guide write to The Bureau For At-Risk Youth, 645 New York Avenue, Huntington, New York, 11743 or call 1-800-99-YOUTH.

Let the Bureau and CRC know if the materials are helpful.

CRC Conference April 24–28, 1996 in Atlanta

Hetherington

Ricci

Gardner

Ross

Panel discussions on move-away issues, a unified family court system, financial and emotional child support, and political issues facing families, will be among the highlights of CRC's 10th national conference at the luxurious Crowne Plaza Hotel in Atlanta April 24–28, 1996.

The tentative conference schedule is:

* Wednesday evening, April 24—a welcome reception for early arrivals and CRC board and chapter meeting open to everyone.
* Thursday morning, April 25—a three-hour session with Dr. Richard Gardner, who will speak on the Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) and the Differentiation between Real and False Allegations of Child Abuse in Child Custody Cases.
* Thursday afternoon, April 25—workshops for CRC chapters (and other individuals who want to start and build organizations) on how to build a chapter, work with the press, the legislature and the judiciary.
* Thursday evening, April 25 to Sunday noon, April 28—talks, panel discussion, a book and author luncheon, a banquet, Candlelight Vigil near the site of the Summer 1996 Olympics, a Sock Hop, entertainment and other activities.

Confirmed speakers and panelists, aside from those listed above, include:

* Isolina Ricci, Ph.D. author of "Mom's House, Dad's House," and Administrator, California Statewide Office of Family Court Services;
* Mavis Hetherington, Ph.D., of Virginia, long-time researcher in divorce, remarriage, and single parent families;
* Wade Horn, director of the National Fatherhood Initiative;
* David Gray Ross, director of the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement;
* John Guidubaldi, Ph.D., nationally known custody researcher and member of the U.S. Commission on Child and Family Welfare.

Conference attendees will be able to obtain CEUs (continuing education units) for mediators (through the Academy of Family Mediators), lawyers (through the American Bar Association), and psychologists and other mental health professionals (through the American Psychological Association).

Rooms in Luxury Hotel for Only $99.

Rooms at the Crowne Plaza, which normally run $160 to $180 per night, are only $99 a night. Up to four people can share the room and cost. Phone the Crowne Plaza at 1-800-554-0055, and mention CRC to get the low rate.

Delta Airlines is offering low airfare rates for CRC conference attendees; phone Delta at 1-800-241-6760, and mention File Number XL2866 which is for the CRC conference. ValuJet also flies from many cities to Atlanta at very low rates.

"This will be the best conference ever," said CRC General Counsel Michael L. Oddenino, who urged CRC to hold the conference in Atlanta, and who, along with CRC Georgia Coordinator Sonny Burmeister, is assisting with conference planning. This is the first CRC conference to be held outside of the Washington, D.C., area.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

CRC's 1996 Conference in Atlanta

Awards Time Again

At the 1996 conference CRC will present the annual Chief Justice Warren E. Burger award for "healers" among lawyers, judges, and others, and its annual Media Awards and Active Parenting Awards. The awards consist of engraved plaques. Nominations should be received by February 28, 1996.

A "Healer" might be:

* *a judge who takes the lead in promoting joint custody (shared parenting);*
* *an attorney who has had an impact on the legal community or a state legislature on behalf of a child's right to two parents and extended family (this is a revised criteria for attorneys).*

For Media Awards possible contenders are:

* *best treatment of children and parents of divorce in the news media (including newspapers, magazines, TV and radio coverage);*
* *best media coverage of a county agency that provides programs for teenage parents, or*
* *best TV series on abuse and false abuse charges.*

For Active Parenting, possible contenders are:

* *programs that help with family formation and family preservation;*
* *programs that help parents do better parenting in the event of divorce.*

Send "Healer" awards nominations to:
Vicki Lansky
Practical Parenting
18326 Minnetonka Blvd.
Deephaven, MN 55391-3200
(617) 475-3527

Send "Best in Media" award nominations to:
James Morning, coordinator
CRC of Delaware
216 Bradley Road
Dover, DE 19901
(302) 734-8522

Send "Active Parenting" nominations to:
Eric Anderson
12103 Scribe Drive
Austin, TX 78758
(512) 836-6621

FAMILY FACTS

Photocopy and distribute the **"Family Facts"** on the next page! Use as hand-outs when visiting the Legislature, disseminating information to the courts or the media, or as a resource for testimony and Letters to the Editor. **"Family Facts"** will be a regular feature of this Newsletter. Send us your verified facts (with actual copies, sources, and dates) to **"Family Facts"** CRC.

Buy Raffles
Win a Picasso Print

"Tete"

An anonymous donor has given CRC a Picasso print, valued at $1,000, to raffle at our 1996 conference.

An inscription on the back of the print says *"Limited edition, re-creation of an oil on canvas entitled 'Tete' by Pablo Picasso created on August 1, 1937. Approved by the estate of Pablo Picasso."*

The professionally double matted frame, in a museum quality mounting encased in glass, cost CRC $250.; thus the print and the frame together are valued at $1250. Only 750 raffle tickets will be printed. The tickets are $2. each, or three for $5. The drawing for the print will be Saturday, April 27, 1996. You do not have to attend the CRC conference to win. Complete the Raffle Ticket form below and mail in.

Raffle Ticket

Send me _____ tickets at $2. each, or 3 for $5.

Charge: MC Visa AmEX
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Fill out the form above, and mail to:
Dr. Gary Santora, 6723 Whittier Avenue, McLean, VA 22101

FAMILY FACTS

Joint Custody Positive for Children

A division of the prestigious American Psychological Association (APA) finds that:

Fact #1: there are "positive outcomes" for children in joint custody when compared to children in sole custody. The review of research in 1995 by Division 16 (School Psychology) of the APA found favorable outcomes for children in joint custody through:

* increased father contact and involvement with children;
* adolescents' positive adjustment (the best interest of the child standard);
* increased or not significantly different child support payments;
* decreased litigation;
* decreased costs to families and judicial systems; and
* less or no greater conflict than sole maternal custody.

Fact #2: Improved policies such as increased mediation, joint custody and parent education will "reduce the present adversarial approach that has resulted in primarily sole maternal custody, limited father involvement and maladjustment of both children and parents."

For copies of this 21–page report, with citations, released June 14, 1995, send $5.00 for postage and handling to John Guidubaldi, Ph.D., John Carroll University, P.O. Box 5190, Kent, Ohio 44242–0001.

Two-Parent Families Continue to Decline

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that:

Fact #1: The number of families with children is increasing, but more of the increase is occurring among single–parent families than among two–parent families.

Fact #2: the number of two–parent families rose 0.7 percent between 1990 and 1994. This positive development is overshadowed, however, by the 4 percent growth in the number of single–parent families over the same time period. Thus, the proportion of all families headed by two parents continues to fall.

Fact #3: In 1970, single–parent families comprised only 12.9 percent of all families. By 1990, single–parent families made up 28.1 percent of all child–present families; and in 1994, 30.8 percent of all families with children were headed by a single parent. Conversely, two–parent families fell from 71.9 percent in 1990 to 69.2 percent in 1994. Among white families, the proportion of all families headed by two parents declined from 89.9 percent in 1970 to 77.4 percent in 1990. Among black families, the proportion fell from 64.3 percent to 39.4 percent.

October 1995 Census Bureau report, obtainable from the Family Research Council, 700 Thirteenth St. N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005, Report No. IF96K3.

Crime

An article in the Washington Post said that:

Fact #1: Young black men raised in single–parent families are twice as likely to engage in criminal activities, when compared with black men raised in two–parent families, even after holding constant a wide range of variables such as family income, urban residence, neighborhood environment and parents' education, according to research by sociologist June O'Neill of the City University of New York.

Fact #2: Illegitimacy is an equal–opportunity scourge, affecting blacks and whites. "The absence of marriage, and the failure to form and maintain intact families, explains the incidence of high crime in a neighborhood among whites as well as blacks," according to Patrick Fagan, a researcher at the Heritage Foundation.

See The Washington Post Outlook Section, July 10, 1994.

Bills and Resolutions in Congress

Welfare Reform Can be Harmful to Children

By Horace A. (Sonny) Burmeister
CRC Georgia Coordinator

Burmeister

Congress and the President are in the process of passing a Welfare Reform measure that contains well-intentioned, but harmful child support provisions for children and families.

In the context of welfare reform, we should remember that in the early 1960's, the U.S. was faced with an out-of-wedlock birth rate of 8% and a divorce rate of around 20%. Concerned men and women, worried about the poverty level of single women with children decided that the government should ensure these families a responsible level of financial support.

Thus was born such programs as Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC), food stamps, public housing allowances, child support enforcement...followed in the next 20 years by child support guidelines, child care, Medicaid, job training, free or subsidized college education, free legal services, etc.

Today, out-of-wedlock births have increased from 8% of all births to nearly 40% of all births (a 400% increase). And divorce rates have nearly tripled, going from 20% to about 50% of first marriages and nearly 60% of second marriages.

What Congress failed to realize is that these welfare programs and child support programs unconnected to parenting were going to "disenfranchise" the non-custodial parent (almost always the father) and financially reward the custodial parent (in most cases, the mother).

U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd said it best, when he observed that "whatever social behavior government rewards financially, government gets more of that behavior."

Thus, we are now faced with the reality that in our good-intentions of empowering women and helping children, we have replaced the traditional two-parent intact family with a "mama and a government check."

Suddenly, the Clinton Administration, in particular Vice President Al Gore, wants to talk about "Fatherless America." Everyone is parroting the plight of children growing up without actively involved fathers. They have finally discovered what many child and family advocacy organizations have been saying for more than ten years—that the one common denominator of nearly all "at-risk" children is that they are being or were raised in a single-parent or sole-custody household.

Still, the Republican-led Congress and the Clinton administration only understand half of that message. They want Americans to believe that all absent parents are absent because they choose and want to be absent from their children's lives. They have yet to realize that absent parents (non-custodial parents) are not as much absent as they are forced out or removed from their children's lives.

Fathers Do Not "Withdraw"

Federally funded researcher Sanford Braver, Ph.D., finds that most fathers do not withdraw their support. For those who had seemingly "withdrawn," Braver noted that "their experience was not one of 'withdrawing' at all. Rather, they felt expelled, kicked out, thrust out of their children's lives. They felt that the system, their ex-spouses, and society's attitudes in combination seemed to combine in such a way as to just get them out of the kids' lives, so they felt that the kids really weren't theirs anymore."

A substantial number of America's 2 million non-custodial mothers feel the same way, as do many grandparents, whose only fault is to be on "the wrong side" of a custody battle.

The losers from these policies are children and families. Now, Congress wants to exacerbate the problem by repeating the failed programs and the financial incentives which have fueled the problem for the past 30 years.

The Welfare Reform bill passed by Congress has "child support" provisions, whose primary three components are:

1) **the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA);**
2) **license revocation** including professional, occupational, drivers', hunting and fishing licenses;
3) **Wage withholding orders and W-4 reporting from all employers.**

At first blush, these ideas sound good. More enforcement because willful non-compliance is the problem—right? WRONG!

This simply goes to prove that the federal government doesn't have a clue as to what the cause of non-compliance is and thus what the solutions or cures should include.

Let's examine their ideas:

1) **UNIFORM INTERSTATE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT (UIFSA)**

Because a vast majority of non-compliance cases involved parents who live in different states, let's replace URESA (Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support act) with UIFSA. Problem is, most federal officials assume that it is the non-custodial parent who has moved out-of-state to avoid paying his or her child support.
WRONG!

In the majority of interstate cases, it is the custodial parent who first moves out-of-state. In fact, nearly 30% of custodial parents will move out-of-state within the first two years following the divorce or separation. And in the vast majority of cases, the move is elective, unilateral, and conducted for the purpose of either the custodial parent getting a "fresh start" away from the former spouse or specifically alienating the children from the non-custodial parent.

NOTE – This is just as common when Dad gets sole custody as it is when Mom gets sole custody. Thus it is not a gender issue as much as it is a power and control issue.

Let's examine what the implications of this reality are:

When the non-custodial parent gets parental access (visitation) from the court and the child lives in the same state, child

(Continued on page 11)

Bills and Resolutions

Continued from page 10

support compliance is 81.1% of cases. But when the children live in a different state and visitation is still allowed, compliance drops to 64%. But when parental access (visitation) is denied by the custodial parent or prevented by financial hardship, compliance drops to 46%.

More importantly and very frighteningly, the UIFSA rewrites our long-standing legal principle that all civil actions would be brought in the county/state of the defendant or respondent. Thus, when a custodial parent wanted to seek a modification for increased child support, he or she had to bring the court action in the jurisdiction of the defendant.

Congress, believing the myth that it was the non-custodial parent who was moving out of state, wanted to make it easy for the custodial parent. So this federal bill (UIFSA) will grant jurisdiction to the state where the custodial parent lives with the children.

Under UIFSA, a custodial parent who lives in a state with fair child supports can "forum" shop by moving to a state with much higher guidelines and awards or a higher age to which a child support must be paid.

For example, Georgia has the highest child support awards in the country at income levels of $50,000 and up. Thus, a custodial parent seeking more money would be motivated under UIFSA to uproot the children and move to Georgia. And Massachusetts allows child support to be paid up to age 23, so that same parent would be wise to move from Georgia to Massachusetts (after getting the high award) and then seek another modification there to extend the cash bounty for five more years.

What ramifications does this have on the child?

Well, remember the politicians talking about "Fatherless America?" These are the same politicians who want to put the economic reward and motivation on the custodial parent moving out-of-state. Again, child support compliance drops from 81.1% to 64% when a move occurs, yet they want to financially reward and motivate such a move.

2) LICENSE REVOCATION.

Simply put, the Clinton Administration and Congress are seeking to remove all licenses of any obligor (non-custodial parent) who is 90 days or more behind in his or her child support. Yet a recent General Accounting Office (GAO) report indicates that 66% of non-custodial parents who do NOT pay their child support CAN'T. Yes, this report debunks the myth of the deadbeat dad (or deadbeat mom) agenda. For years, the federal government along with states have flooded the media with this message of irresponsible parents, acting maliciously and willfully to avoid paying financial support to their children.

This report reveals that the problem is not willfulness but inability. Now, Congress wants to take away any means that this struggling parent has of meeting his or her obligation. Sadly and tragically, license revocation will simply ensure that more children get nothing.

3)FEDERAL WAGE WITHHOLDING AND W-4 TRACKING

Finally, we come to mandatory federal wage withholding orders and W-4 tracking through employers. Imagine what small to medium sized companies are going to do when they learn that not only do they have to report each and every employee they have in their employment who is divorced or separated and has an existing child support order, but also deduct and forward said child support to the custodial parent prior to paying this employee. Thus in addition to payments to the IRS for federal taxes and FICA, and payments to the State for state withholdings, we are now going to burden the employer further by requiring him to forward monies to any employees' former spouse and family.

The consequences of this madness is already felt. Employers are discriminating against potential employees who are under a child support obligation. Thus, non-custodial parents are having an increasing problem finding gainful employment. And when mom or dad can't get a job and can't earn money, guess who suffers—THE CHILD.

So again, Congress exacerbates the child's suffering. Yes, good intentions, but disastrous outcomes.

Tragically, these are three of the key child support components of welfare reform. All are doomed to failure. Each will further harm our children and families.

Welfare Reform

By CRC Staff

The Welfare Reform bill passed by Congress contains block grants for the states to implement welfare reform.

One of the goals of welfare reform adopted as part of the bill at the urging of custody reform activists is to "encourage the formation and preservation of 2-parent families."

The amendment, inserted into the bill at the last minute by Congressional conferees, encourages the states to develop programs that ensure the involvement of both fathers and mothers in the raising of their children.

This provision in the law will enable CRC and other advocates for stronger families to urge the states to adopt the proposals that CRC advocates have been circulating on Capitol Hill in the past several months.

Three of the proposals that states could adopt are described here in brief:

ELIGIBILITY

Current practice: When a parent applies for welfare, the bureaucracy fails to determine whether the parent seeking welfare coverage actually has custody of the child.

CRC Proposal: State laws should be amended to state that

> Section ____ . No funds shall be available under this title for payment to a parent on behalf of a child unless the parent seeking eligibility has sole custody of the child or, in cases of joint custody, the parents apply jointly for benefits.

Children born to married couples in all states are deemed to be in the joint custody of both parents unless and until a court order is entered restructuring the custodial rights of one of the parents. If one parent uses the child to apply for welfare but the child is actually in the sole or joint custody of the parent who does not need or seek welfare assistance, welfare should not be provided. Inquiring into custody will prevent fraud on the system by parents who do not have custody yet obtain welfare.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

PARENTAGE ESTABLISHMENT

Current practice: Paternity is established in only about 34 percent of cases.

Congressional change: States must try to establish paternity in 100% of cases, including greater emphasis on in-hospital paternity establishment.

CRC Proposal: The states can more clearly meet this goal by having both parents complete a "parentage form," by which both parents acknowledge their mutual rights and responsibilities for support, custody, and access/visitation. The forms would not determine the amount or form of support, custody or access, only that both parents are to be responsible for the child. CRC has such a form, which has been adapted for use in the state of Vermont.

KINSHIP CARE

Current practice: When a child is removed from a home because of abuse and neglect, most states place the child in foster care. A few states, including New York, try to place the child into kinship care, so that a member of the extended family, e.g., grandparent, other parent, aunts or uncles, may care for the child.

CRC Proposal: Kinship care should not only be utilized in abuse and neglect cases, but the states should also go back upstream, and seek kinship care as an alternative to welfare.

Kinship care builds upon the concepts of eligibility and parentage establishment described above. That is, a parent would not be eligible for welfare if there is a family member (kin) who is willing and able to care for the child while a parent seeks educational and job opportunities. Parentage Establishment means that the other parent and his/her family would be among the kin who are asked if they are willing to care for the child voluntarily. A parent's wanting to go on welfare would not be acceptable if there are kin available to care for the child.

CRC has a one-page "Kinship care" form that both parents can complete, to state whether there are kin who would or would not willingly care for the child while the custodial parent, instead of going on welfare, seeks educational or job opportunities.

Eight State Welfare Reform Proposals

In addition to 1) Eligibility, 2) Parentage Establishment, and 3) Kinship Care, CRC also has information on

4) Parenting Education
5) Proof of custody required for welfare eligibility
6) Wisconsin Plan that increases welfare payments if the Mother marries the father of the child
7) Notification of termination of employment and
8) Responses to Welfare Fraud

For a package containing all 8 items, CRC members send $5.00, non-members send $10.00 to CRC for postage and handling.

Access/Visitation Grants

The Welfare Reform bill (H.R. 4) also contains an authorization (Sec. 469A) for access/visitation grants to the states.

The key portion of the provision is:

"In General – The Administration for Children and Families shall make grants under this section to enable States to establish and administer programs to support and facilitate absent parents' access to and visitation of their children, by means of activities including mediation (both voluntary and involuntary), counseling, education, development of parenting plans, visitation enforcement (including monitoring, supervision and neutral drop-off and pick-up), and development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements."

Allotments to States – Minimum Allotments – The Administration for Children and Families shall adjust allotments to States...to ensure that no State is allotted less than–

(a) $50,000 for fiscal year 1996 or 1997; or
(b) $100,000 for any succeeding fiscal year.

State Administration – Each State to which a grant is made under this section

(1) may administer State programs funded with the grant, directly or through grants to or contracts with courts, local public agencies, or non-profit private entities;
(2) shall not be required to operate such programs on a statewide basis; and
(3) shall monitor, evaluate, and report on such programs tin accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

The state may have to provide 10 percent of the costs of operating such a program.

CRC Note: Although the above will be authorized when the welfare reform/child support bill is signed into law, Congress must later, separately, provide the actual funding (money) for these grants, before they can be awarded. Funding would not take place until 1996.

Because all of the funding can be subcontracted to "non-profit entities", this is a marvelous opportunity for custody reform advocates to help fashion programs that will involve parents in the raising of their children, and to help run those programs, to the extent that they can.

We urge all persons interested in being recipients of these grants to attend the CRC conference to obtain training on how to get certified as an access/visitation counsellor. Such certification, though not required, could provide training and credibility in the running of access programs.

Background

In the 1988 Family Support Act, Congress, with CRC as the catalyst, authorized $2 million in access/visitation "demonstration" grants. The grants, which were for about $300,000 each, were awarded to seven states over a two-year period.

The success of those grants helped convince members of Congress and officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which administered the grants, that access/visitation measures could be effective, low-cost, and helpful to families.

The result is that Congress is now authorizing such grants for all 50 states in the welfare reform/child support bill.

In the Courts

Support of Second Family

A trial court was right to depart from the Wisconsin child support guidelines, because the children are with the father 35 percent of the time, and because he supports two children from his current marriage, the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, Third District, held April 25. The court found that the lower court could reasonably conclude that the amount of time the children spend with the father is relevant, because it relates directly to the financial resources the mother will need to support the children when they are in her care. In addition, while the father's subsequent family does not entitle him to "serial family payer" status under the support standards, he is obliged to support the subsequent family and therefore his obligations should be considered, the Appeals Court said.

Molstad v. Molstad (Miser); Wis Ct App 3dDist. No. 94–3324–FT. 4/25/95)

Parental Relocation

A trial court may include a provision that restricts a custodial parent's ability to relocate with the children, the Washington Court of Appeals decided on May 30. Primary residential care may be conditioned on the parent's remaining in a particular location, if the children would be harmed by a move, the court said. The case involved a couple who were both lawyers. Although the couple initially lived in Alaska, the wife was unhappy there, and they finally decided to move to Seattle. During a transition period while the husband moved his law practice to Seattle, the wife stayed home with the children, but after the husband had completed the move to Seattle, the wife filed for divorce, and then expressed a desire to move to Texas. The Appeals Court rejected her argument that a parenting plan providing that the children would be automatically transferred to the father if the mother moved was improper. While the choice to live where one wants is constitutionally protected, the court said, the children's best interests were served by having the stability of staying in the Seattle area and maintaining the relationship with the father. The mother would be able to obtain employment in Seattle, the court said.

(In re Sheley (Michele); Wash Ct App. No 34407–2–1, 5/30/95).

College Expenses

A divorced father's obligation to contribute to his adult son's college expenses should have been based on actual educational expenses, not on the state's child support guidelines, the Pennsylvania Superior Court ruled on April 25. The state recently enacted college support legislation, and the court set out factors to advise judges in applying the new statute. The adult child's specific college costs, rather than the parents' income levels, are the key consideration, the Superior Court said. The support award must be limited to the educational expenses defined in the law, the court said. One judge dissented from the decision, arguing that the act is unconstitutional on equal protection grounds, because parents in an intact family are not liable for their adult children's college expenses.

(Bolton v. Bolton; Pa SuperCt, No. 00964 Phil. 1994, 4/25/95)

No Absolute Immunity for False Allegations of Sexual Abuse

The U.S. District Court for the District of Vermont rejected the claims of a psychiatrist and two state social services workers that they were entitled to immunity under a Vermont law requiring physicians who reasonably suspect child abuse to file a report with the state. A father in the case was falsely accused of sexual abuse of his son and stepson, in the context of a divorce case. The father argued that the actions violated his civil rights to be free of the state's arbitrary interference in his familial relationship. The U.S. District Court found that the evidence suggested that the actions of the psychiatrist (who was the therapist of the children's mother) were possibly deceitful, and went beyond simply making a report. The court noted that the psychiatrist had urged the maternal grandmother not to report her suspicions that the mother was abusing the children, on the grounds that this would "hurt" the mother's case. The court also held that the social workers had conducted an "extraordinarily shoddy and unprofessional investigation" of the allegation of the child abuse by the father, and thus violated his constitutional rights.

(Wilkinson v. Balsam); DC Vt., No 2–:94–CV–375, 4/17/95).

Federal Intervention in Domestic Relations

The federal Child Support Recovery Act is an unconstitutional exercise of Congressional power under the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona ruled on July 26. The court referred to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Lopez case, where the Supreme Court ruled that a federal gun control law was unconstitutional, because it did not have enough connection to interstate commerce. The U.S. District Court for Arizona acknowledged that the federal Child Support Recovery Act requires that the delinquent child support payor and the child live in different states. However, the court ruled that the interstate "nexus" is not enough to have a substantial effect on interstate commerce. U.S. v. Schroeder; DC Ariz. No. CR 95–010 7/26/95)

(The same court issued a substantially similar ruling in U.S. v. Mussari, DC Ariz. No. CR 95–0009, 7/26/95).

(Because other federal courts have held the Child Support Recovery Act constitutional, the U.S. Supreme Court may have to ultimately rule on this issue).

Around the Country

Seven Years Left to Turn the Tide

Horn

"America may have only seven years until the majority of children will be living in single-parent households, and when that happens, the social and psychological forces seeking to justify the choice to raise children in single parent households will overwhelm those who are trying to re-establish two-parent households as the norm," said Wade Horn, director of the National Fatherhood Initiative, at the National Conference of Fathers and Children (NCFC) conference in Atlanta on October 13, 1995.

"The consequence of the majority of children growing up in single parent households is a slow, continuing social decay, including increasing violence, welfare dependency, alcohol and drug abuse, and educational failure," said Horn.

"America thus has only about seven years to re-establish fatherhood as an important priority. This means that during these seven years, all segments of our society need to understand that what children need to grow up well, and what communities need to function well, is involved, committed and engaged fathers. America has to do everything to support men in the indispensable work that they do as fathers. Children need fathers as well as mothers," said Horn, a former official in the Bush Administration in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

For further information, contact Horn at NFI, 600 Eden Road, Building E, Lancaster, PA 17601, phone (717) 581-8860.

Michigan Friend of the Court Worthwhile, but Needs Improvements

Casey

Every state has staff to informally resolve child support problems. Michigan is the only state that also has, through its Friend of the Court system, staff to help parents informally resolve access/visitation questions.

Problems exist with the Michigan Friend of the Court (FOC), however, according to Laurie Casey, a senior policy analyst for CRC, who visited Michigan seven times over a seven month period and conducted six open forums to gather information. Casey surveyed the FOC at the invitation of the Michigan chapter of CRC. The problems described in Casey's 26-page report include the following:

* not enough people know about the existence of the FOC, because inadequate information is given to the public about the operations of the Friend of the Court;

* enforcement of access/visitation awards is not given half the priority that child support enforcement is given;

* even for custodial and non-custodial parents who use the FOC system, they are given inadequate information as to their rights and responsibilities;

* there is no oversight of the staff in the 84 Michigan counties that make up the Friends of the Court.

* too many people wind up going to court because the officials of the FOC make recommendations that are often not in accord with due process.

The way the Friend of the Court system is structured, officials in each county are supposed to informally resolve custody, access and support problems, without parents having to go to court. It is the only statewide informal resolution in the country.

"The Michigan FOC is a positive first step to creating a balanced family law system that the rest of the country can emulate, but legislators in Michigan are aware that more must be done to make the FOC more effective," said Casey. She said that Michigan legislators have introduced 41 bills this year to make improvements in the FOC.

Casey, in conjunction with other groups in Michigan, conducted the forums in various Michigan counties. More than 200 people testified, including people who work in the FOC, as well as members of the general public.

Groups that helped Casey conduct the hearing are Just Us, For Children, Fathers for Equal Rights, National Congress for Fathers and Children, The Child's Other Family, and other groups and individuals, including grandparents.

Copies of the report may be obtained from Laurie Casey for $10.00 for CRC members, and $15.00 for non members. Order copies from Laurie A. Casey, P.O. Box 81, Moriah Center, NY 12961, phone 518-942-3366.

Why Work, Asks Study, if Welfare is More Lucrative?

Excerpts of article by reporter Cheryl Wetzstein, in The Washington Times September 19, 1995

In many states, welfare benefits are more generous than first-year salaries for teachers, secretaries and janitors, according to a study released September 19.

In the six most generous states, tax-free cash and non-cash welfare benefits "exceed the entry-level salary for a computer programmer," said Cato Institute analysts Michael Tanner and Stephen Moore and Hartland Bank chief executive David Hartman.

"If Congress or state governments are serious about reducing hard-core welfare dependence and rewarding work, the most promising reform is to cut benefit levels substantially," they concluded.

The study should help define what constitutes welfare, Mr. Tanner said, noting that several senators had talked recently about the "meager levels of benefits."

For their welfare study, Cato analysts counted the value of seven welfare programs from which most recipients were likely to receive benefits: cash, food stamps, Medicaid and housing, utilities, and nutritional assistance.

The researchers then figured out the amount of gross income the recipients would have to earn to match their welfare packages. In virtually every state, the analysts said, the welfare package "substantially exceeds the amount a

(Continued on page 15)

Chapter News

New Jersey
Aggressively Seeking Media

"Vigorously informing the general public of what is happening in the divorce process is our goal this year," said Dominick R. Romano, the new president of the New Jersey Council for Children's Rights (NJCCR).

"Our aim is not just to reach people who are having divorce problems, but also to show the general public how the process affects them and their children." said Romano.

NJCCR has, through newspaper and magazine interviews, radio and tv shows, and letters to the editor, established good rapport with the media, said Romano.

A monthly magazine, "Single Parenting", published in New York City, with a 200,000 circulation in the tri-state (New Jersey, Connecticut, New York) area, has published several articles by NJCCR members, and provided free advertising space with the chapter's phone number.

NJCCR also had an article published in "Modern Dad," a new magazine published bi-monthly by Next Generation, Inc., 7628 N. Rogers Avenue, Chicago, IL 60626.

NJCCR's recipe for obtaining coverage on radio stations is to determine which shows have a talk show format, identify the programming director, then contact that person with an offer to have chapter members talk about the chapter, or about individual problems. NJCCR members have appeared on such stations as WMTR and WPIK in New Jersey, and WFHA in New York City.

Georgia
Family Court Advances

The Georgia Commission on the Family Court, a creation of the Georgia State Bar, has recommended establishment of a Family Court System in Georgia. This recommendation is a direct result of an initiative proposed five years ago to the legislature by the Georgia CRC, "an initiative that was initially laughed at by the chair of the House Judiciary Committee, who said a Family Court would never be created in Georgia. The opposition was enormous," said Sonny Burmeister, CRC coordinator in Georgia.

"What we proposed was taking a third of the existing superior court judges and all of the juvenile court judges and creating a special Family Division of the court to hear all family related matters. One family – one judge, was our philosophy," said Burmeister.

He said that 44 percent of the entire case load of the Superior Court system – the basic trial level for Georgia – is family related.

For two years, the idea lay dormant. Then a state legislator introduced a resolution that would put the question on the state ballot as a constitutional change for the citizens to decide. The resolution passed with a 58 percent favorable vote last Fall.

Now that the Georgia Commission has recommended establishment of the Family Court, the legislature must decide on funding. Estimates are that it will cost between $5 to $10 million to establish, but Burmeister thinks there will be long range savings because a Family Court will use a more preventive, comprehensive approach, rather than merely be a reaction and punishment approach to family problems.

Burmeister said there is "concern about whether we can afford a Family Court system, but my position is can we afford not to have the family court system."

New York City
Parent in Marathon

CRC member Nathan Becker ran 26 miles in the New York City Marathon on November 12, 1995 wearing a T-shirt that said on the back "The Best Parent is Both Parents." A photograph of Becker and his 4 year old daughter, Alexandra, appears on the front of the T-shirt. It is "a mood shot, which shows the love between father and daughter," said Serge Prengel, president of the NYC chapter. Prengel said that other CRC members, wearing the sameCRC T-shirts, stood at the 16th mile marker to encourage Becker in his race. Some of the T-shirts were sold to passers-by, said Prengel. Additional T-shirts are available from the NYC Chapter for $15.00 for members of the NYC chapter, and $20.00 for non-members, including shipping. "These T-shirts capture the parent-child relationship," said Prengel. See the address of the New York City chapter elsewhere in this newsletter.

Why Work, Asks Study,

(Continued from page 14)

recipient could earn in an entry-level job."

In the District of Columbia, for example, a recipient would have to get a job worth $29,100 a year to match the welfare package. In Maryland, a recipient would need to earn $22,800, and in Virginia, $23,100.

In 46 states, welfare recipients get the equivalent of $7.16 an hour or more; in 17 states, they get the equivalent of $10 an hour or more.

National median hourly wages are $9.01 for an entry-level secretary, $6.75 for a janitor and $13.03 for a computer programmer. First year teachers typically earn $23,258 a year, the study said.

"Any welfare-reform proposal must recognize that individuals are unlikely to move from welfare to work as long as welfare pays as well as or better than working," the analysts said.

In addition, Congressional welfare reforms "are unlikely to work as long as benefits are this high," Mr. Tanner said.

He recommended states use their block-grant sums to adopt one-stop-shopping welfare offices for efficient management of the system, and set the total maximum benefit level at the poverty level.

Many social-policy and welfare advocacy groups argue that welfare benefits have diminished over time, and they urged greater assistance for people trying to leave the rolls.

(Editor's note: Welfare recipients also have free time, and what is that worth?)

Inside CRC

Senator Graham is new CRC Advisor

U.S. Senator Bob Graham (D–FL) is the newest advisor to CRC.

Graham, who has been a Senator since 1980, is a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which decides on all financial issues, including appropriations affecting children and families.

Graham accepted as an advisor to CRC in October, 1995.

CRC President David L. Levy, who went to the University of Florida with Graham some years ago, said "we are delighted that Senator Graham, who has a reputation for integrity and knowledge of the issues, is our newest advisor."

U.S. Senator Fred Thompson (R–TN) is also a CRC Advisor.

Joan Langworthy new Treasurer

Joan Langworthy, a volunteer who has handled CRC finances for the past year, has accepted the position of Treasurer of CRC. As Treasurer, Joan will be a member of the CRC Board of Directors.

Joan, who has a background in financial management, sales, and marketing, retired from the General Motors Corporation in 1982.

Joan ran the registration desk at the 1995 CRC conference in Bethesda, MD. "Joan was the very friendly, capable grandmother at the registration desk whom everyone liked instantly," said CRC Secretary Ellen Levy.

Joan got involved with CRC because of her attempt to help her son Michael Scott who had been having difficulties obtaining liberal access with his son, Jake, Joan's grandson.

Joan called CRC for help, obtained some resources, and then started volunteering to help CRC.

The Scotts are from Joan's first family. Joan is re–married, to Col. Everett Langworthy (ret. USAF), who is also helping CRC.

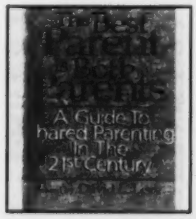
Keller and Bauserman, Researchers

Anna Keller and John Bauserman have expressed an interest in evaluating research for CRC, which they have been doing for several years, rather than continuing as vice–presidents of CRC.

Conference attendees have seen Keller and Bauserman each year at CRC conferences, presenting their evaluations of research. Bauserman's specialty has been evaluating joint custody research, while Keller has evaluated child support research and other literature on families and divorce.

"We appreciate Anna and John's past contributions to kids and CRC, and hope for much more help from them in the future," said CRC president David L. Levy.

CRC Book in New York



The New York City chapter of CRC has ordered 18 copies of the CRC book, The Best Parent is Both Parents, for distribution to the media and to judges, in the hope that information in the book will help educate reporters and judges about the need of children for two parents. The book offers tips to parents and professionals on how to maintain involvement by both parents in the event of divorce. The 157–page book sells for $9.95. Ask at your local bookstore for the book, or order from CRC. For orders from CRC, add $3.00 for postage and handling. Book orders should be addressed to CRC, 220 I Street N.E., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20002. If you would like the copy autographed by David L. Levy, who edited the book, just state to whom you would like it autographed (yourself, perhaps your children—give their names) and your autographed copy will be sent to you.

CRC on Internet

Interest in CRC on the Internet is growing. Bruce Kaskubar, CRC coordinator in Minnesota has placed CRC on the Internet Worldwide Web. For those of you with a browser, the home page's URL is http://www.vix.com/crc/aboutcrc.htm. Bruce would like to field questions from individuals, as well as members of other groups who are interested in CRC.

Advertisement

Blue–Green Algae

So long, Geritol; Welcome to the Algae Generation -- headline on Washington Post story about Blue-Green algae August 20, 1995.

Help CRC, your body and your income. For the health and energy you want, call CRC for a free tape explaining Call Tech, a company whose sales and profits tripled in the past 12 months.

The most commonly reported benefits people experience eating a super Blue-Green algae (a wild, whole food, 100 percent vegetarian) are enhanced mental focus and agility, greater vitality and stamina, effortless weight loss, and ability to handle stress with calm.

Write or phone CRC for your free tape today! Call-Tech donates a portion of its proceeds to children in need, from Cambodia to south-central Los-Angeles.

Beat the Tax Man: Contribute to CRC

If you would like to consider leaving a bequest or property in your will to CRC, please let CRC know of your generosity.

Contact your accountant or tax advisor on the best way to structure any such bequest.

Or contact CRC, and we can suggest an accountant or tax advisor to assist you.

Chapters Exist in 31 States

Charette

Wyoming is the latest state to have a CRC chapter, pushing to 31 the number of states with CRC chapters.

The coordinator of the new Wyoming chapter is Tammy Charette. Tammy works in a plant in a coal mine in the Powder River Basin, checking weights for loading onto trains which will carry the coal from the mine to electric companies. Tammy is married, and helps care for two step–children.

If you live in a state where there is a CRC chapter, we urge you to join the chapter. In this way, you will be networking with a chapter and national CRC to reform custody laws and attitudes around the country. By becoming a member of the chapter, you also become a member of national CRC.

Romano

Dominick Romano is the new president of the New Jersey Council for Children's Rights (NJCCR). The outgoing president is Richard Martin. The NJCCR regularly rotates its officers and board members. NJCCR was the first state group to become a CRC chapter in 1990, when chapter development began.

Note: CRC's name is protected by federal trademark law.

National Affiliate Organizations and Chapters

National Affiliate Organizations

Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC)
Jennifer Isham, president
P.O. Box 27417
Houston, TX 77227–7418
1–800–457–MWOC
Joint membership in MW/OC and CRC: $35.00 a year

Parents Without Partners (PWP)
Linda Napolitano, president
401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
312–644–6610
Members of PWP join CRC for only $20.00 a year.

Stepfamily Association of America (SAA)
Judith L. Bauernfeld, Ph. D., president
215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 212
Lincoln, Nebraska 66505
(402) 477–7837
Joint membership in SAA and CRC: $35.00 for the first year

CRC Chapters

Alabama
E.D. Wilson, coordinator
CRC of Alabama
19993 Thompson Hall Road
Fairhope, AL 36532
(205) 928–0464

Alaska
Diana Buffington, coordinator
CRC of Alaska
P.O. Box 92309
Anchorage, AK 99509
(907) 277–3561

Arkansas
Dwayne Hall, coordinator
CRC of Arkansas
505 E. 25th St.
Texarkana, AR 75502
(903) 793–4994

California
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CRC of California, Sacramento chapter
P.O. Box 60811
Sacramento, CA 95860
(916) 635–2590

Ivy Walker, chair
CRC of California, Solano Chapter
P.O. Box 795
Vacaville, CA 94585
(707) 451–7481

Colorado
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CRC of Colorado
3150 Teardrop Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80917–3318
719/597–MARK

Connecticut
Bob Adams, president
Divorced Men's Assn. of CT
P.O. Box 380576
E. Hartford, CT 06138–0576
(203) 568–7742

Eleanora Drechsel, president
Mothers Protecting Children
P.O. Box 196
Ansonia, CT 06401
(203) 734–1328

Delaware
James Morning, president
(302) 734–8522
Bill Barrell, coordinator
CRC of Delaware
P.O. Box 182
Bethel, DE 19931
(302) 875–7353

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Ray Stahon, Sergeant–at–arms
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27 Possum Pass Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33413
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Kris Kline state coordinator,
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Piotr Blass, assistant state coordinator
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(309) 697–3235

Indiana
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2625 N. Meridian, Suite 202
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(317) 925–5433

Grandparent Rights in New Strength (G.R.I.N.S.)
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0689 CR 5
Corunna, Indiana 46730
(219) 281–2384

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Omaha, NE 68137–5387
(402) 330–3353

Michael Kaiser, president
CRC of Nebraska–Lincoln chapter
P.O.Box 80414
Lincoln, NE 68010–8908
(402) 488–8908

Dick Woods, president
Fathers for Equal Rights, Inc.
3623 Douglas Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50310
(515) 277–8789

New Jersey
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New Jersey Council for Children's Rights (NJCCR)
P.O. Box 316
Plackemin, New Jersey 07978–0316
(201) 694–9323

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CRC of New York
231 Main Street, Suite 1
Vestal, NY 13805
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Portland, Oregon 97208
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Philadelphia, PA 19129
(215) 727-0708

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CRC of Tennessee
5914 Charlotte Avenue
Nashville, TN 37209
(615) 327–8667

Texas
Children's Rights Coalition (Affiliate)
P.O. Box 12961
Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711
(512) 499–8CRC

Vermont
Fred Tubbs, coordinator
Vermonters for Strong Families
RR1, Box 267A
Heartland, VT 05048
(802) 436–3089

Virginia
John Vaughan, vice–president
CRC of Virginia, Tidewater chapter
P.O. Box 61245
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
(804) 463–KIDS

CRC of Virginia, Richmond chapter
Murray Steinberg, president
CRC of Virginia, Richmond Chapter
10210 Pepperhill Lane
Richmond, VA 23233
(804) 740-9889

Paul Robinson, president
Fathers United for Equal Rights and Women's Coalition
P.O. Box 1323
Arlington, VA 22210–1323
(703) 451–8580

Barry Young, president
CRC of Virginia, Roanoke Valley chapter
433 Howard Drive
Salem, VA 24153
(703) 382–0150

Cindy Ewing, CRC Virginia coordinator
(804) 543-5993

Wyoming
Tammy Charette, coordinator
CRC of Wyoming
7027 Blacktooth Street
Gillette, WY 82718
(307) 687-7858

For development of chapters in states:
* west of the Mississippi that do not yet have any CRC chapters, contact chapter coordinator Eric Anderson, 12103 Scribe Drive, Austin, TX 78759, phone (512) 836–6621
* east of the Mississippi that do not yet have CRC chapters, contact chapter coordinator Michael Ewing, 3029 Yokima Road, Chesapeake, VA 23325, phone (804) 543–4993.

Ask Messrs. Ewing or Anderson for a copy of the 100–page CRC booklet that explains everything you want to know about affiliation. Enclose $10.00 for photocopying and postage.

To form additional chapters in states that already have one or more chapters, contact the state coordinator or existing state chapter head listed above.

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Here are *some SPECIAL ADDITIONS* to the

Children's Rights Council

1995

CATALOG OF RESOURCES

for parents and professionals

Putting Kids First

by Michael L. Oddenino

CRC's General Counsel

The book offers a Children's Bill of Rights, a sample Custody Agreement, and Ten Suggestions for keeping kids out of post–divorce conflicts.A must for people interested in child and family welfare!

153 pages, illustrated, hardback, $16.95

And also order the book entitled **Healing Hearts, by Elizabeth Hickey, M.S.W. and Elizabeth Dalton, J.D. $19.95**

The Parental Alienation Syndrome,
by Richard A. Gardner, M.D.,
348 pages, $30.00 hardback.

Paperback Books by Warren Farrell, Ph.D.
The Myth of Male Power, 447 pages, $13.00.
Why Men Are the Way They Are, 410 pages, $6.00.
The Liberated Man, 350 pages, $6.00.

The CRC Catalog lists more than 100 books, written reports, audio-casettes, model bills, and gifts for children. Members can receive additional free copies of the catalog by contacting CRC. Non-members can order one for $1. Write to: CRC, 220 I street, NE, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002-4362.

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Healing from Divorce: Healing Wounded Hearts,

a new video designed to stimulate communication between divorced parent and child. Meant to be watched in the privacy of your own home. About 50 minutes. **$19.95**

Advertisement

Kidney Exchange for Legal Services

Mid-40's female will trade HEALTHY KIDNEY for $30,000 worth of aggressive, loyal, principle-centered legal services. Mother needs representation in dispute over access to 9 year old son. All alternatives have been attempted. Mom fights unlimited funds. Child has substantial trust and has been trafficked by court system as an economic pawn. Ultimate goal is 50% placement of son. This is not an organ sale; this is a 3-way exchange. No hidden meanings. Serious replies only please. Nancy Kellog, P.O. Box 14, Lake Mills, WI 53551.

(Editor's note: CRC checked with a doctor who is familiar with ethics as related to medicine. He says people give body parts away, and there is no law forbidding the above exchange. Nor, he states, is there any ethics-in-medicine opinion on this subject).

New CRC Directory

The target date for publication of CRC's sixth edition of its "Parenting International Directory" is February, 1996. The directory will list about 1,200 organizations in the U.S. and abroad involved in custody reform, mediation, parenting, and financial child support.

Order your copy of the sixth edition in hardcopy or on disc. IBM 3 l/2" HD disc will be provided unless 5 l/4" HD or DD disc is specifically requested.

The price is $12.00 for CRC members, and $15.00 for non-members.

Send any additions, corrections or deletions for the Directory to Paul Robinson, 3702 Melrose Avenue, Forestville, MD 20747, or by fax (301) 568-5812. Paul Robinson is helping to prepare the directory for CRC.

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The Quarterly Newsletter of The Children's Rights Council, Inc.
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IN THIS ISSUE:

Presumption for Joint Custody 1
Sonny Burmeister 3
Audio Tapes 4
Around the Country .. 7
Family Facts 9
In the Courts 10
Bills and Resolutions 11
CRC Book Special 14
Chapter News 15
Inside CRC 16
List of Chapters 17
Thank You 18
Catalog of Resources 19
New Parenting Directory 19
Move-Away Expert .. 19

PRESUMPTION FOR JOINT CUSTODY TAKES EFFECT IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Brazil

Barry

A bill to create a rebuttable presumption for legal and physical joint custody became law in the District of Columbia on April 18, 1996.

After a close vote on the District of Columbia City Council, Mayor Marion Barry enthusiastically signed the bill. The bill was then referred to Congress, for the 30 day review period that Congress has over District of Columbia legislation. If Congress does not veto a District bill within 30 legislative days (which in this case is April 18), the District bill becomes law.

The law states that "There shall be a rebuttable presumption that joint custody is in the best interest of the child or children".

The law also:

* sets forth 17 factors that a court must consider in making a joint or sole custody determination;

* requires each parent to submit a detailed parenting plan regarding the allocation of rights and responsibilities of each parent;

* provides that an objection by one parent to any custody arrangement shall not be the sole basis for refusing the entry of an order for the custody arrangement that the court considers to be in the best interest of the child. (Thus the whim, caprice, or anger of one parent will not dictate any custodial arrangement that one parent does not like);

* provides that if a judge does not enter an order for joint custody, the judge must state in writing why joint custody is not being given.

The law also creates a presumption against joint custody when a judicial officer has found by a preponderance of the evidence that domestic violence has occurred, or where there is an instance of child abuse, an instance of child neglect, or parental kidnapping.

Barry Hill, a CRC member, attorney and divorced father, who knows all 13 Councilmembers personally, worked hard to educate them about the need of children of the District for two parents.

"This is an incredibly strong, rebuttable presumption legislation for the nation's capitol, because only in rare instances will joint custody not be given," Hill predicted.

The sponsor of the legislation was Councilman Harold Brazil, who said "I pursued presumptive joint custody legislation in the District of Columbia because I firmly

(Continued on page 5)

Only until June 1996! Bulk copies of CRC book $4 each (for the purchase of 10 or more copies). See page 14 for order details.

"Speak Out for Children" is published by the Children's Rights Council, Inc. Editor: David L. Levy. Contributors to this Issue: Don Bieniewicz, David Dinn, Paul Robinson, Kenneth Skilling, Harvey Walden; college student interns Monica Alexandris, Wesleyan University; Kimberly Loughry, Marietta College; Megan Nason, St. Lawrence University. Newletter layout by Kathleen L. Ballard.

CRC is a member (Number 1513) of

Children's Charities of America

About CRC

The Children's Rights Council (CRC) is a nation-wide, non-profit IRS 501(c)(3) children's rights organization based in Washington, D.C.

CRC works to strengthen families through education and advocacy. We favor family formation and family preservation, but if families break up, or are never formed, we work to assure a child the frequent and continuing contact with two parents and extended family the child would normally have during a marriage. Our motto is "The Best Parent is Both Parents."

For the child's benefit, CRC favors parenting education before marriage, during marriage, and in the event of separation. We work to demilitarize divorce between parents who are involved in marital disputes, substituting conciliation and mediation for the adversarial process, and providing for comprehensive child support. We also favor school-based programs for children at risk.

Formed in 1985 by concerned parents who have more than 40 years collective experience in divorce reform and early childhood education, CRC has chapters in 30 states and three national affiliate organizations: Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC), Parents Without Partners (PWP), and the Stepfamily Association of America (SAA).

Prominent professionals in the fields of religion, law, social work, psychology, child care, education, business, and government comprise our Advisory Panel.

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Sonny Burmeister, Child Advocate, Dies

Horace W. "Sonny" Burmeister, one of the most active child advocates in the country, and a CRC leader, died February 26 from head injuries received when he fell from a ladder. He was 46.

Burmeister

Sonny, state coordinator of CRC in Georgia, had built his group into the largest CRC chapter in the U.S., and he was to be the host of CRC's 10th national conference in Atlanta April 24-28. This is the first year that CRC is holding its conference outside of Washington, D.C., and Sonny's abilities as an organizer and speaker were instrumental in the decision to hold the conference in Atlanta. The conference will continue as planned, with a special annual award to be named in honor of Sonny, said CRC President David L. Levy, after consulting with other CRC leaders across the country.

Sonny wrote about national as well as Georgia political and judicial affairs in newspaper articles and in his widely distributed monthly newsletter "Voices for Children."

His analyses of issues often appeared in the CRC newsletter "Speak Out for Children," the most recent of which was in the Fall 1995/Winter 1996 issue, in which he analyzed the Welfare Reform bill passed by Congress.

In that issue, he also said that the Georgia Commission on the Family Court, a creation of the Georgia State Bar, has recommended establishment of a Family Court System in Georgia, a proposal that took five years of hard work to overcome heavy political opposition.

And in an article in the Atlanta Journal on February 27, the Journal noted that Sonny "was instrumental in introducing legislation in Georgia for the joint custody of children of divorced parents." The bill passed the Georgia Senate just two weeks before Sonny died.

At past CRC conferences, Sonny was noted for leading the annual vigils at the Lincoln or Jefferson Memorials in prayer for children's rights, and for prayerfully leading the Closing Circle, which closes the conferences.

"He had a generous spirit," said his fiance, Candace Schooley of Roswell. "He was compassionate with people and passionate about this beliefs."

Born in West Virginia, Sonny graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1971 from West Virginia University and later attended Indiana University School of Law.

He was an Army veteran, serving in Texas, South Korea and at Fort Gordon as a communications and electronics officer.

Upon leaving the Army, he moved to Atlanta in 1976 as an executive recruiter.

Gov. Zell Miller appointed him to the Gender Bias Commission and the Governor's Commission on Children and Youth.

"He was never afraid to put pen to paper to get his message out," said Ms. Schooley. "He wasn't afraid to get someone else to do it, either."

Among his honors were serving as president of the Georgia Association of Personnel Consultants and on the National Board of Directors to the National Association of Personnel Consultants in 1985.

Surviving are three children, Eric Burmeister, 22, of Athens, Ohio, who teaches high school English, Yohanna "Honni" Burmeister, 18, and Aaron Matthew Burmeister, 16, in San Ramon, California, his mother, Claudia Burmeister of Athens, GA, and four sisters, Betsy Burmeister of Athens, GA., Joanne Burmeister of Atlanta, Kerry Burmeister of Williamson, WV, and Sharon Burmeister Lord of Charleston, WV.

At the funeral, attended by 500 people, many of whom are parishioners at the Roswell United Methodist Church, all three of Sonny's children spoke lovingly of their dad. Eric read two poems he had written about his dad the night before. After the service, Eric noted that his grandmother Claudia wrote poetry constantly, and her poeticising inspired most members of the family, including Sonny, to also write poetry.

Also after the funeral, Claudia said that Sonny would call her almost every day, while Sharon said that she is the Republican candidate for Congress in the third Congressional district of West Virginia, around Charleston, where the Burmeister family, including Sonny, grew up; her opponent is incumbent Democrat Nick Joe Rahall.

Indeed, there were as many references to West Virginia as there were to Georgia during the eulogies for Sonny.

The minister of the church said that Sonny often slipped him "a big bill" to help a family that needed food, fuel or housing, and that Sonny often joined churchmembers in prayer and song "even though Sonny couldn't sing very well."

There were also references to Sonny's booming, but encouraging, warm voice, and to his compassion for people.

Levy was invited by Candace Schooley to speak at the funeral, and his remarks were directed primarily to Sonny's three children. Levy's wife Ellen also attended, as did Texas CRC advocate Paul LeBon, his wife Susan, and other CRC members.

The family asked that contributions be given to CRC, at 220 I Street N.E., Washington, D.C. They will be used to set up an annual memorial to Sonny. "Sonny did and continues

(Continued on page 6)

AVAILABLE ON AUDIO CASSETTE

Children's Rights Council's 10th National Conference ... Valuing Families
April 24 -28, 1996 — Atlanta, GA

__CRC01 Parenting Alienation Syndrome (PAS) and The differentiation between Real and False Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse: Gardner, Richard M.D. (part 1 of 2)

__CRC02 Parenting Alienation Syndrome (PAS) and The differentiation between Real and False Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse: Gardner, Richard M.D. (part 2 of 2)

__CRC03 How to Start and Grow a CRC Chapter; Programs and Services: Kaskuber, Bruce; Martin, Richard; and Ewing, Michael

__CRC04 Working with Courts and Commissions: Ewing, Cindy

__CRC05 Working with your State Legislators and Congress: Ell, Ted; Walden, Harvey; Anderson, Eric, and Earnhardt, Kent .

__CRC06 Working with the Media: Romano, Dominick and Dinn, David

__CRC07 Conducting Research and Documenting Evidence of Problems of Bias: Bauserman, John; Bieniewicz, Don; and Garrod, David

__CRC08 Children of Divorce: Neuman, Gary M (part 1 of 2)

__CRC09 Children of Divorce: Tharpe, Janet (part 2 of 2)

__CRC10 The Family Friendly Court System - It's Mission, Structure, Resources and Services: McIsaac, Hugh , Odenino, Michael L; Messinger, Steven J; and Ricci, Isolina

__CRC11 Shared Parenting (Joint Custody) Physical and Legal: What it is, What Works, and What Doesn't: Cook, James A; Gadrix, Ed; Guidubaldi, John; Hetherington, Mavis; and Termini, Ann Marie (part 1 of 2)

__CRC12 Shared Parenting (Joint Custody) Physical and Legal: What it is, What Works, and What Doesn't: Cook, James A; Gadrix, Ed; Guidubaldi, John; Hetherington, Mavis; and Termini, Ann Marie (part 2 of 2)

__CRC13 Valuing Families - The Media and the Family: Blau, Melinda; Mr. Moby

__CRC14 Keynote Address: Speaker to be announced.

CRC VALUING FAMILIES 1996

__CRC15 The Move-Away Case: The Important Factors in Dealing with a Significant Geographic Move by One Parent: Cohen, Miriam; Gold, Harold; Hetherington, Mavis; Stettner, Pamela; and Zapf, Charles

__CRC16 Mediation as an Alternative to Litigation Wars: Hickey, Elizabeth; Gibson, Kathryn; and Myers, JoAnne.

__CRC17 Child Custody Evaluations - The Role of the Experts: Eisenberg, Don; Guidubaldi, John; Hale, Vallery, and Warshak, Richard

__CRC18 How to Improve State Child Support Guidelines and Performance: Bieniewicz, Don; Flohr, Sara; and Ross, David Gray

__CRC19 Politics and the Family - Federal and State Policies and Their Impact on Families: Haskins, Ron; Henry, Ron; and Horn, Wade

__CRC20 Parenting Issues After Divorce: How to do it Right: Bradford-Stern, Bev; Glinka, Deborah; Major, Jayne and Ricci, Isolina

__CRC21 Parental Alienation, Child Abuse and Domestic Violence: How these Issues Affect Children: Sauber, Richard; Straus, Murray; Tong, Dean and Wagner, Barbara

__CRC22 Men's and Women's Issues as they Affect Children of Divorce: Ballard, Travis; Bonhomme, Jean; Engel, Margorie; Harrington, Bill; and Leving, Jeffery

__CRC23 The Michigan Friend of the Court System, a Model We Can Learn From and Improve: Casey, Laurie; Hobman, Phil; Johnson, Marie and Radditz, Matthew

__CRC24 Corporal Punishment - Spanking of Children and its effect on Marriages: Straus, Murray.

__CRC 25 Minority Citizens - Non Custodial Mothers, Custodial Fathers, Step-Parents and Grandparents: Berryhill, Kay and Ray; Devine, Helen; Devine, Jerry; Fuller, Nancy B and Isham, Jennifer

__CRC26 Empowering the Reform Movement: Henry, Ron and Levy, David.

"Train Up A Child In The Way He Should Go....."
Proverbs 22: 6

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Presumption for Joint Custody

(Continued from page 1)

believe that we as a society must presume that the care of two parents, not one, is in the best interests of the child. It takes two parents to conceive a child; it must take two parents to raise that child even when the relationship between the parents breaks down. Neither parent can walk away from the child, and the law should not make it easier for them to do so."

Supporters of the legislation note that joint custody is important for the often-overlooked 90 percent of parents who do not litigate over custody, but who bargain in the shadow of the law; if the law expects them to draw up voluntary agreements that involve a child having both parents involved in the child's life, they are more likely to do so if they live in a joint custody state. Mediation and parenting education can also help facilitate the shared parenting process.

A copy of the final legislation passed in D.C. can be obtained from CRC.

Other State Actions

The District's action follows passage of a presumption for joint custody that became law in Texas last year.

And in a flurry of action in February, 1996, a presumption for joint custody passed the Senate in Georgia, the Senate in Virginia, and the Senate in Michigan. The bills did not pass the House in those three states or the vote was put off to a later date.

Still, this is the first time that a presumption for joint custody has advanced that far in those states, and the supporters are heartened.

"We have gotten further in Georgia than ever before," said Harry Prillaman, new CRC coordinator for Georgia, who credited the late Sonny Burmeister, and Rick Waller of CRC of Georgia, Kent Earnhardt of Fathers are Parents Too (FAPT), and many others for helping to educate senators about the importance of parenting post-divorce.

"We are encouraged by how far this bill got in Virginia," said Cindy Ewing, CRC coordinator in Virginia. Cindy credited Murray Steinberg of CRC, Stuart Miller of the American Fathers Coalition, Robert Seidenberg of Fathers for Virginia, and many others for their efforts.

"The presumption for joint custody was overwhelmingly approved by the Senate," said Terry Sternaman of CRC of Michigan, who credited the National Congress for Fathers and Children, For Children, Fathers for Equal Rights, school teachers, and other men and women for winning Senate support for the bill.

Joint custody is legal in 49 states (only South Carolina appears to not permit it). In 14 of those states and the District of Columbia, joint custody is a rebuttable presumption or preference.

California Still Favors Joint Custody

The Atlanta Constitution ran several editorials containing errors to justify their opposition to a presumption for joint custody, errors that were analyzed in letters to the editor that the Constitution declined to publish. Additionally, Jim Cook, president of the Joint Custody Association in Los An-

Cook

(Continued on page 6)

CRC Conference April 24-28, 1996, in Atlanta

Panel discussions on move-away issues, a unified family court system, financial and emotional child support, and political issues facing families, will be among the highlights of CRC's 10th national conference at the luxurious Crowne Plaza Hotel in Atlanta April 24-28, 1996.

Speakers at the conference will include Melinda Blau, Bev Bradburn-Stern, Richard Gardner, John Guidubaldi, Bill Harrington, Mavis Hetherington, Wade Horn, David Gray Ross, Isolina Ricci, Murray Straus and Richard Warshak.

"This will be the best conference ever," said CRC General Counsel Michael L. Oddenino, who urged CRC to hold the conference in Atlanta. This is the first CRC conference to be held outside of the Washington, D.C. area.

News about the conference will appear in our next newsletter.

Gardner

Hetherington

Horn

Ricci

Ross

Elaine Majewski-Gillman

Elaine Majewski-Gillman, one of the earliest advocates for a child's right to two parents, died March 26, 1996, after living valiantly with cancer for six years.

Majewski-Gillman

Elaine was a co-founder and board member of the New Jersey Council for Children's Rights (NJCCR). She also was instrumental in getting NJCCR to become CRC's first and largest chapter in the early 1990's. She is survived by her husband, Bruce Gillman, and her stepdaughter, Hallie, 18. Bruce was also a co-founder of NJCCR.

Elaine, 44, died at home. She had undergone bone marrow transplant at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore several years ago. Her last employer was Warner Lambert Corp. in the computer systems field.

She and Bruce loved good food, wine, and travel. Elaine had an outgoing personality.

"In sickness and in health, Elaine was an inspiration to everyone who knew her. She had the courage of her convictions and a zest for life," said Ellen Levy, secretary of CRC.

"Elaine was a remarkable person, strong, and capable, a wonderful child and family advocate," said CRC president David L. Levy. A memorial for Elaine was held in New Jersey on March 28, which many of her friends, including Levy, attended.

"Elaine will be sorely missed. She and a small handful of others are the bedrock upon which our organization was founded," said NJCCR Chairman Richard Martin.

Elaine asked that contributions in her memory be sent to NJCCR, at P.O. Box 316, Pluckemin, NJ 07978, or the Center for Hospice Care, West Hanover Ave., Morristown, NJ 07960.

Joint Custody

(Continued from page 5)

geles, also sent materials to the Constitution, which were ignored prior to the appearance of the editorials. Some of the items alleged by the Constitution, which are incorrect, were referred to by Cook, in an interview with CRC. They are:

* California did not repeal its joint custody statute. California added a provision to its statute several years ago but did not wipe out or reject joint custody, as the Constitution implied. Additionally, the editorial did not say what the addition was to the law. Specifically, it didn't mention that the addition indicated no preference nor presumption for sole custody. Admittedly, the statute says there is no preference nor presumption for either sole or joint custody, but the over-all impact of the entire California statute gives a definite favoritism towards joint custody.

* the editorials also imply that the American Bar Association (ABA) passed a statute for delivery to the states. However, in truth, after four years and eight meetings, an ABA committee created a sample joint custody statute for delivery to the ABA's general assembly at the Honolulu convention in August, 1988. The assembly acknowledged acceptance of the committee's report, but specifically voted from the floor not to recommend or deliver that proposed bill to state legislatures.

Additionally, by the time the ABA's deliberation was over, overwhelming most state legislatures had already passed joint custody statutes, many of which were more advanced and favorable than the ABA committee's example.

* The Constitution also mixed up two things. One was a proposed bill recommended by a task force made up primarily of anti-joint custody feminists who created a California Senate bill which contained between 25 and 31 provisions for limiting decrees of joint custody. During 16 months of legislative debate, each one of these provisions was eliminated from the bill by the legislature. It was the remains of that bill that added the provision referred to above to provide there is no presumption for either sole or joint custody.

The other item was a study that was critical of joint custody where parents are highly antagonistic to each other, but that study failed to analyze the underlying issues of what parents are fighting about. The really needed research is to find out what couples are warring about, and what can be done about their anxiety. Any effort to inspire individuals to exacerbate their warring in order to defeat joint custody must be examined carefully.

In the California statute, in 13 different sections, judges are cautioned to make their custody decisions based on the best interest of the child. "Best interest of the child" is the overriding determinant in joint custody law. Joint custody continues to be the overwhelming and voluntary choice of divorcing parents in California.

Sonny Burmeister

(Continued from page 3)

to inspire me with his talent, compassion and enthusiasm," said Cindy Ewing, CRC coordinator in Virginia.

"I know no one who sacrificed more, or who was more effective, in advancing the cause of children of divorce," said David Dinn, CRC coordinator in Indiana.

"Sonny's legacy inspires us all to envision more, to do more, and to care more. His spirit will continue to drive many wonderful accomplishments for children as we continue our labors energized by our memories of Sonny," said CRC General Counsel Michael Oddenino.

A New View of Child Support

The above illustration distributed by the federal Child Support Office is indicative of the changes that have occurred in that office since David Gray Ross became its director. Declaring when he became director in January, 1994, that "Children need and deserve two parents, four grandparents, and extended families," Ross urged the 50,000 federal child support staffers around the country to think about "new ways" of doing things to carry out his goal of "children first."

Supporting the Role of Fathers

In response to President Clinton's June 16, 1995, memorandum on supporting the role of fathers in families, Donna Shalala, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued 8 goals and principles. HHS includes the Child Support Office headed by David Gray Ross.

The Child Support Report, the publication of the Child Support Office, December 1995 issue, said that "The goals (of HHS) mandate;

* coordinating a comprehensive program strategy to strengthen services for fathers and children;

* assuring that research efforts appropriately investigate the roles of fathers in families and the effects of fathering on child well-being and help to inform broader government research collaborations on the importance of including research on fathers and fathering;

* using positive, supportive messages and language regarding fathers and fatherhood in all publications and announcements;

* ensuring that the workplace is supportive and responsive to the needs of all employees raising children;

* all fathers can be important contributors to the well-being of their children;

* parents are partners in raising their children, even when they do not live in the same household;

* the roles fathers play in families are diverse and related to cultural and community norms;

* men should receive the education and support necessary to prepare them for the responsibility of parenthood; and

* government can encourage and promote father involvement through its programs and through its own workplace policies.

(Editor's note: In regard to the third bullet above, the federal Child Support Office has not used the phrase "deadbeat parents" or any variation of that phrase since Ross became director in 1994.

CRC Indiana coordinator David M. Dinn wrote to Ross in January, 1996, praising him on themes now carried in what Dinn said was the "new" Child Support Report.

"Regardless of the group of people at issue," wrote Dinn, "it's safer to assume they want to do the right thing; and then if they're not, to then try and find out the real reasons they're not performing as expected.")

Second-Wives Protest

An article in the Los Angeles Times Magazine, entitled "Not With My Husband's Money You Don't!", told of "The Second Wives Crusade" to change what they see as excess child support being paid by their husbands for his first family, leaving the second family impoverished. "The courts treat dads as if they are sperm donors and walking wallets" said Roberta Hopkins-Brown, 35. To feminists, the split among women on child support is a wrenching repeat of divisions that have surfaced on other gender issues, the article said.

Women members of COPS (Coalition of Parental Support) were shown waving signs at demonstrations saying "Second Family=Second Class," and of their concerns that they cannot afford to have a child by their second husband. COPS helped pass legislation in California that no longer allows judges to routinely include the new wives' income in court calculations of how much the husbands can pay. COPS was launched in 1992 by second wife Lori Sanders-Crabb who was outraged as she heard a judge invoke California's new guidelines to more than triple her husband's monthly child support payments for one child to $642. Today, three of five members of the COPS statewide executive board are women, according to co-founder Dave Whitman. COPS groups also exist in other states.

From Los Angeles Times Magazine, December 3, 1995.

FAMILY FACTS

Photocopy and distribute the "Family Facts" on the next page! Use as hand-outs when visiting the Legislature, disseminating information to the courts or the media, or as a resource for testimony and Letters to the editor. "Family Facts" will be a regular feature of this Newsletter. Send us your verified facts (with actual copies, sources and dates) to Family Facts, CRC.

Helping Kids Materials

The Bureau For At-Risk Youth is now offering free its brand-new 80-page buyer's guide with hundreds of award-winning and exclusive videos, posters, publications and prevention programs for parents, educators, counselors and other professional youth workers.

To receive a free copy of the Bureau's 80-page catalog, write to The Bureau For At-Risk Youth, 645 New York Avenue, Huntington, New York, 11743 or call 1-800-99-YOUTH.

Let the Bureau and CRC know if the materials are helpful.

Children's Day

For several years, the Children's Rights Council (CRC) has observed that although many Americans have talked of the need for the U.S. to declare a national Children's Day, no such Holiday has ever been officially declared. Congress has passed Resolutions saying the second Sunday in October should be observed as Children's Day, but it is not a holiday similar to Mother's Day or Father's Day. CRC believes there should be a Children's Day, and it should not be in October, but in June, nestled between Mother's Day and Fathers Day. CRC is, accordingly, issuing the following proclamation.

Proclamation

Whereas more than 100 countries around the world celebrate a national holiday known as "Children's Day," but the United States does not have such a holiday, and

Whereas many churches in the United States already sponsor "Children's Day" observations on the first or second Sunday in June, and

Whereas the first or second Sunday in June is nestled between Mother's Day and Father's Day, where a Children's Day ought to be, and

Whereas there should be a special day to celebrate children, and the enormous contribution they make to our lives, and

Whereas children are our most precious resource, deserving and needing of our love and care, and

Whereas children need the emotional and financial support of their parents, and the caring resources of our communities, schools, and neighborhoods,

We Hereby Declare the first Sunday in June as national Children's Day. In 1996, that day falls on June 2.

To Celebrate national Children's Day, we urge all Americans to hold parades, children's activities, family celebrations, and church and synagogue activities on behalf of children on the first Sunday in June.

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Children without fathers–no single factor in American life has been more clearly implicated in a host of modern problems. Youth violence, teenage pregnancy, and academic failure, among other woes, have been associated with father absence or lack of paternal involvement. Yet we do little to promote healing between fathers and children whose relationships have come apart.

I propose that Father's Day, 1996, be designated as a day of national healing for fathers and children whose relationships have been weakened or never had a chance to fully develop. I further propose that time-limited amnesty be extended to parents who owe financial child support in return for commitments to make affordable, but substantial, support payments and to maintain consistent relationships with their children.

Certainly, we can muster the will and the wisdom to offer fathers opportunities similar to those offered illegal aliens or "draft dodgers" in the past, especially when the welfare of our children is at stake.

This effort must be truly nonpartisan in order for it to be successful. In this age of cynicism, any hint of political gain would sully it from the outset. It must also not be a bureaucratized national effort.

Rather, it must be a philosophical, spiritual, and structural change that starts at the most basic level, the individual and the family, and echoes through our communities, cities, states, and nation. A mature society cannot survive with a system of retributive justice alone.

We must recognize that some problems require restorative justice. Such justice would, in this case, restore the greatest level of support and caring to those who need it most, our children.

We stand at the threshold of yet another generation of children whose fathers will all too often be strangers. We ignore this opportunity to promote healing at our own peril. We must act. The time is now.

Gerald S. Mayer, Ph.D., P.C.
Licensed Psychologist
Phoenix, AZ

Family Facts

Children's Problems Increase Without Fathers

When fathers disappear, dangers for children and adolescents multiply. Recently, sociologists at Case Western Reserve University analyzed those "environments that place children and adolescents at particularly high risk for problems in health and development." The researchers assessed six measures of "risk to children and adolescents": 1) low birth weight rate; 2) infant death rate; 3) teen birth rate; 4) juvenile delinquency rate; 5) high school drop out rate; and 6) school reading performance..."The single variable that was the strongest predictor of child and adolescent risk across the board was the rate of births to unmarried mothers." ...the evidence suggests that the "predominance" of female-headed households "may be associated with a particular ecology in which children and adolescents do not thrive."

Source: Claudia J. Coulton and Shanta Pandey, "Geographic Concentration of Poverty and Risk to Children in Urban Neighborhoods," American Behavorial Scientist 35 [1992]: 238-257

Grim Connection

Doctors still do not well understand the cause or causes of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS. But epidemiologists are finding that this tragedy is often linked –in some way–to birth outside marriage...identified "unmarried status" of mothers as one of the "causal pathways for SIDS."..researchers discovered that children of unmarried mothers were remarkably overrepresented (odds ratio of 2.4) among infants who died (of SIDS)

Source: DeKun Li and Janet R. Daling, "Maternal Smoking, Low Birth Weight, and Ethnicity in Relation to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome," American Journal of Epidemiology 134 [1991]: 958-964

Dark Thoughts

Dark and violent thoughts fill the minds of adolescent children of divorced parents more often than the minds of peers from intact homes. In a recent study in rural Kansas, researchers Michael Workman and John Beer investigated the mental health of over 100 high school. Workman and Beer discovered that on standard psychological tests, "students from divorced homes scored significantly higher on depression than those from nondivorced homes" (166.62 vs. 8.85). The researchers also discovered that students from divorced homes had "higher scores on aggression" than did peers from intact families.

Source: Michael Workman and John Beer, "Depression, Suicide Ideation, and Aggression Among High School Students Whose Parents Are Divorced and Use Alcohol at Home," Psychological Reports 70 [1992]: 503-511

Problems for Children of Divorce

Serious problems crop up much less often among children living with married parents than among children of parents who have never married or have divorced..."problems and competencies"...17.4 percent scored above the 90th percentile in Adaptive Child Questionnaire (ACQ) problem scores, compared to only 9.2 percent among children living with married parents. Interestingly, among children living with *widowed* parents, ACQ problem scores were *not* distinctively elevated.

Source: Thomas M. Achenbach, et al., National Survey of Problems and Competencies Among Four to Sixteen-Year-Olds: Parents' Reports for Normative and Clinical Samples, Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, Serial No. 225, Vol. 56, No.3, 1991, pp. 68-93

Risks in Single-Parent Homes

Living in a single-parent home appears particularly risky for sons. The authors of this new study report that "male children from one-parent families were found to have more illnesses than female children... Furthermore, for both sons and daughters, living with an unmarried mother often means poorer mental health."

Source: Gong-Soong Hong and Shelley I. White-Means, "Do Working Mothers Have Healthy Children?" Journal of Family and Economic Issues 14 [1993]: 163-181.

Move-Aways Encouraged

In a major blow to a child's's right to two parents, New York's highest court has made it easier for custodial parents to move their children out of state. The unanimous decision by the Court of Appeals on March 26, 1996, overturned a requirement that custodial parents who want to move out of state meet several standards, like providing that a move is prompted by "exceptional" circumstances. Instead, the seven judges on the appeals panel ruled that legal authorities judging such cases should be governed largely by one central concern: the best interest of the child. "Like Humpty Dumpty," the court said in the ruling written by Judge Vito Titone, "a family once broken by divorce cannot be put together in precisely the same way.:

In the last decade, high courts in at least 20 states have upheld the right of the custodial parent to relocate, even if the move made it harder for the other parent to see his or her child.

From The New York Times, March 27, 1996.

***(Editor's note:** The New York Court did not say what the "best interests" of the child encompassed, but presumably, to the court's thinking, that does not include the right of a child to close and continuing contact with both of the child's parents.)*

Presumption Favoring Child's Parents

The presumption that a natural parent has a prima facie right to custody is no longer the standard governing custody disputes between parents and third parties, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court declared on November 29, 1995. Parenthood would be a factor of "significant weight," the Supreme Court said, but it would not be the paramount consideration. The case involved a situation where grandparents had been granted physical custody of two children because of marital problems between the parents while they were married. The agreement that the grandparents should have custody was later incorporated into the parents' divorce decree, but the mother subsequently petitioned for physical custody.

(Rowles v. Rowles; Pa SupCt, No. 73 W.D. 1994, 11/29/95)

Interference With Visitation

A trial court properly transferred custody of four children to their father after their custodial mother was repeatedly found in contempt for continually frustrating the father's court-ordered visitation rights, the Wyoming Supreme Court ruled on November 22, 1995. The court rejected the mother's argument that no substantial change in circumstances had occured that would justify a custody change. The court said the children's welfare was affected by the denial of visitation and that other techniques had failed to get the mother to obey court orders. Thus, the "drastic" measure of a custody change was approproate.

(Ready v. Ready; Wyo SupCt, No. 95-66, 11/22/95)

'Home State" and Child Concealment

A mother who had concealed a child from the father, and had moved to another state, cannot claim the new state as the "home state" for purposes of the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act, the Indiana Court of Appeals held on February 15. The father had brought the child from California, where the family lived, to Indiana, then filed for divorce and custody there. After the father succeeded in getting custody in Indiana, the mother went into hiding in Oregon with the child, and instituted a custody proceeding there. The Indiana Court of Appeals relied on the Uniform Jurisdiction Act's tests of "best interests of the child" and "significant connection" in deciding that Indiana retained jurisdiction over custody.

(Ashburn v. Ashburn; Ind CtApp, No. 34A04-9504-CV-117, 2/15/96)

Day Care and Custody

A father should not have been granted custody of an out-of-wedlock child solely because the mother was in college and the child was in day care for much of the time, the Michigan Court of Appeals decided. The case attracted much attention when first decided in favor of the father. However, the appeals court said that the father's ability to have a blood relative, rather than a stranger, look after the child should not have been the deciding factor. The appeals court concluded there was no basis for removing the child from the established custody of the mother.

(Ireland v. Smith; Mich CtApp, Nos. 177431 & 182369: 11/7/95, released 1/23/96)

Annuity as Guarantee of Child Support

A father should not have been ordered to purchase an annuity that would pay support up to his child's 18th birthday, the Missouri Court of Appeals held on January 11. The court said that the liability for future support terminates upon an obliger's death, and the annuity requirement amounts to an order for posthumous child support.

(Amyx v. Collins; Mo CtApp, No. 19964, 1/11/96)

All of the above cases except the first one are summarized from Family Law Reporter. They appear here by permission of the publisher, The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc.

Welfare Reform

Welfare Reform continues to be the engine that is fueling Congress's efforts to reform family policy in America.

President Clinton vetoed a Congressionally passed welfare reform bill earlier this year, but Congressional leaders have heard from the National Governors Conference, and have held hearings on ways to fine tune the bill. Some revisions are expected by the Republican leadership. But whether a somewhat revised bill will be passed by Congress and sent to President Clinton, or whether the Republican leadership will wait until after the Fall elections to see who is elected President before pursuing further efforts at welfare reform, is not yet known.

Copies of the Welfare Reform bill, H.R. 4 (or any other bill) can be obtained by writing or phoning your members of Congress. The Capitol Hill switchboard at 202-CA4-3121 can connect you to any Senator or Congressmember, or you can make a local call in your state to the local office of your representatives in Congress.

H.R. 4 is about 600 pages. 450 of those pages deal with welfare reform, and 150 pages deal with financial child support.

The Welfare Reform bill contains block grants for the states to implement welfare reform, primarily measures aimed at getting people off welfare over a period of time.

One of the goals of welfare reform adopted as part of the bill at the urging of custody reform activists is to "encourage the formation and preservation of 2-parent families."

This amendment would encourage the states to develop programs that ensure the involvement of both fathers and mothers in the raising of their children.

This provision of the law will enable CRC and other advocates for stronger families to urge the states to adopt the proposals that CRC advocates have been circulating on Capitol Hill in the past several months.

Three of the proposals that states could adopt are described here in brief:

ELIGIBILITY

Current practice: When a parent applies for welfare, the bureaucracy fails to determine whether the parent seeking welfare coverage actually has custody of the child.

CRC Proposal. State laws should amended to state that

Section ____ No funds shall be available under this title for payment to a parent on behalf of a child unless the parent seeking eligibility has sole custody of the child or, in cases of joint custody, the parents apply jointly for benefits.

Children born to married couples in all states are deemed to be in the joint custody of both parents unless and until a court order is entered restructuring the custodial rights of one of the parents. If one parent uses the child to apply for welfare but the child is actually in the sole or joint custody of the parent who does not need or seek welfare assistance, welfare should not be provided. Inquiring into custody will prevent fraud on the system by parents who do not have custody yet obtain welfare.

PARENTAGE ESTABLISHMENT

Current practice: Paternity is established in only about 34 percent of cases.

CRC Proposal: State laws should be amended to state that

Section ____ Efforts must be made to establish paternity in 100% of cases, including greater emphasis on in-hospital paternity establishment.

To meet this goal, the should states require that both parents complete a "parentage form," by which both the father and the mother acknowledge their mutual rights and responsibilities for support, custody, and access/visitation. The forms would not determine the amount or form of support, custody or access, only that both parents are to be responsible for the child. CRC has such a form, which has been adapted for use in the state of Vermont.

KINSHIP CARE

Current practice: When a child is removed from a home because of abuse and neglect, most states place the child in foster care. A few states, including New York, try to place the child into kinship care, so that a member of the extended family, e.g., grandparent, other parent, aunts or uncles, may care for the child.

CRC Proposal: State laws should be amended to state that

Section ____ Kinship care should not only be utilized in "worst case scenario" abuse and neglect cases, but also as an alternative to welfare before problems arise.

KINSHIP CARE builds upon the concepts of eligibility and paternity establishment described above. That is, a parent would not be **ELIGIBLE** for welfare if there is a family member (kin) who is willing and able to care for the child while a parent seeks educational and job opportunities. **PARENTAGE ESTABLISHMENT** means that the other parent and his/her family would be among the kin who are asked if they are willing to care for the child voluntarily. A parent's wanting to go on welfare would not be acceptable if

(Continued on page 12)

Welfare Reform

(Continued from page 11)

there are kin available to care for the child.

CRC has a one-page "Kinship care" form that both parents can complete, to state whether there are kin who would or would not willingly care for the child while the custodial parent, instead of going on welfare, seeks educational or job opportunities.

Four Other State Welfare Reform Proposals

In addition to 1) Eligibility, 2) Parentage Establishment, and 3) Kinship Care, CRC also has information on

4) Parenting Education

5) Wisconsin Plan that increases welfare payments if the Mother Marries the father of the child

6) Notification of termination of employment

7) Responses to Welfare Fraud

For a package containing all 7 items, CRC members send $5.00, non-members send $10.00 to CRC for postage and handling.

Write to Congress

Write to your U.S. Representative and two U.S. Senators, urging them to include provisions for ELIGIBILITY, PARENTAGE ESTABLISHMENT, and KINSHIP CARE in the Welfare Reform bill, before the bill is revised and sent to President Clinton.

Sample letters on following page. With all the mail your Congresspersons get, they need to get many letters telling them about the above items before those issues register on their Congressional Radar. Get your friends to write, also. We suggest that each letter be on a separate sheet of paper, because each is on a different topic, although several letters may be included in the same envelope.

Financial Child Support Provisions in the Welfare Reform Bill

The Welfare Reform bill also contains provisions for financial child support, two of whose components require the states to

1) revoke licenses (including professional, occupational, drivers' hunting and fishing licenses) of parents who are more than 90 days delinquent in child support, and

2) adopt the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA)

At first blush, these ideas sound good. More enforcement, because willful non-compliance is the problem. WRONG. There is flawed analysis to both issues.

1) LICENSE REVOCATION

A recent General Accounting Office (GAO) report indicates that 66% of non-custodial parents who do NOT pay their child support CAN'T. Yes, this report debunks the myth of the deadbeat dad (or deadbeat mom) agenda.

This reveals that the problem is not wilfulness but inability. Now, Congress wants to take away any means that this struggling parent has of meeting his or her obligation. Sadly and tragically, license revocation will simple ensure that more children get nothing.

2) UIFSA.

Because a vast majority of non-compliance cases involve parents who live in different states, URESA (Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act) is to be replaced with UIFSA (Uniform Interstate Family Support Act). The problem is that most federal officials assume that it is the non-custodial parent who has moved out-of-state to avoid paying his or her financial child support.

Yet in the majority of interstate cases, it is the custodial parent who first moves out of state. Nearly 30% of custodial parents will move out-of-state within the first two years following the divorce or separation. And in the vast majority of cases, the move is elective, unilateral, and conducted for the purpose of either the custodial parent getting a "fresh start" away from the former spouse or specifically alienating the children from the non-custodial parent.

This is just as common when Dad gets sole custody as it is when Mom gets sole custody. This is not a gender issue as much as it is a power and control issue.

UIFSA will encourage "forum shopping" in the new jurisdiction to which a parent has moved. It could also encourage forum shopping by the non-custodial parent in access/visitation cases. (Above comments on license revocation and UIFSA written by Sonny Burmeister last fall.)

Write to Congress

License revocation and UIFSA would be federal law today if President Clinton had signed the Welfare Reform bill. His veto provides an opportunity for Congress to revisit these issues. Whether they do or not depends in part on how much mail they receive–particularly from women constituents.

Access/Visitation Grants

The Welfare Reform bill (H.R. 4) also contains an authorization (Sec. 469A) for access/visitation grants to the states.

The key portion of the provision is:

"In General - The Administration for Children and Families shall make grants under this section to enable States to establish and administer programs to support and facilitate absent parents' access to and visitation of their children, by means of activities including mediation (both voluntary and involuntary), counseling, education, development of parenting plans, visitation enforce-

(Continued on page 13)

Welfare Reform

(Continued from page 12)

ment (including monitoring, supervision and neutral drop-off and pick-up), and development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

Allotments to States - Minimum Allotments - The Administration for Children and Families shall adjust allotments to States...to ensure that no State is allotted less than-

(A) $50,000 for fiscal year 1996 or 1997; or

(b) $100,000 for any succeeding fiscal year.

State Administration-Each State to which a grant is made under this section

(1) may administer State programs funded with the grant, directly or through grants to or contracts with courts, local public agencies, or non-profit private entities;

(2) shall not be required to operate such programs on a statewide basis; and

(3) shall monitor, evaluate, and report on such programs in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary."

The state may have to provide 10 percent of the costs of operating such a program.

CRC Note: Although the above will be authorized when the welfare reform/child support bill is signed into law, Congress must later, separately, provide the actual funding (money) for these grants, before they can be awarded. Because all of the funding can be subcontracted to "non-profit entities", this is a marvelous opportunity for custody reform advocates to help fashion programs that will involve parents in the raising of their children, and to help run those programs, to the extent that they can.

We urge all persons interested in being recipients of these grants to attend the CRC conference to obtain training on how to get certified as an

(Continued on page 14)

Write to Congress!

Dear – (Representative or Senator)

Re: **UIFSA**

In the Welfare Reform bill, Congress is requiring all states to adopt the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA). The reasoning is that because the majority of financial child support non-compliance cases involve parents who live in different states, a new law should work to resolve problems between states.

In the majority of interstate cases, however, it is the custodial parent who first moves out-of-state, not the non-custodial parent. In fact, nearly 30% of custodial parents will move out-of-state within the first two years following the divorce or separation. And in the vast majority of cases, the move is elective, unilateral and conducted for the purpose of either the custodial parent getting a "fresh start" away from the former spouse, or specifically alienating the children from the non-custodial parent.

This is just as common when Dad gets sole custody as it is when Mom gets sole custody. Thus it is not a gender issue as much as it is a power and control issue.

In states where UIFSA has been adopted, it is already leading to more forum shopping, in child support cases, as well as in access/visitation cases.

Sincerely yours,

–

Your name and address

Write to House members at:
Representative —
(name of your Representative)
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Write to Senators at:
Senator — (name of your Senator)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear – (Senator or Representative)

Re: **KINSHIP CARE**

Congress should amend the welfare reform bill (H.R. 4) to provide that states should use kinship care as an alternative to welfare.

This means that when a parent applies for welfare, officials should determine if there is a family member (kin) who is willing and able to voluntarily care for the child while a parent seeks educational and job opportunities.

If there are relatives who voluntarily wish to care for the child, the parent's preference for welfare would not be controlling.

Sincerely yours,

–

Your name and address

Dear — (Representative or Senator)

Re: **WELFARE ELIGIBILITY**

Congress should amend the welfare reform bill (H.R. 4) to provide that no funds shall be available under this bill for payments by a state to a parent on behalf of a child unless the parent seeking welfare eligibility has sole custody of the child or, in cases of joint custody, the parents apply jointly for benefits.

Inquiring into custody will prevent fraud on the system by parents who do not have custody yet obtain welfare.

Sincerely yours,

—

Your name and address

Dear – (Representative or Senator)

RE: **LICENSE REVOCATION**

In the Welfare Reform bill, Congress is requiring the states to revoke all licenses of any obligor (non-custodial) parent who is 90 days or more behind in his or child support.

Yet a General Accounting Office (GAO) report indicates that 66% of non-custodial parents who do not pay their child support CAN'T. Yes, this report debunks the myth of the deadbeat dad or deadbeat mom agenda. This report reveals that the problem is not willfulness but inability. Now, Congress wants to take away any means that this struggling parent has of meeting his or her obligation. Sadly and tragically, license revocation will simply ensure that more children get nothing.

Sincerely yours,

—

Your name and address

Dear — (Senator or Representative)

Re: **PARENTAGE ESTABLISHMENT**

Congress should amend the welfare reform bill (H.R. 4) to state that states must try to establish paternity in 100% of cases, including greater emphasis on in-hospital paternity establishment.

Vermont already uses a "parentage form" by which both parents acknowledge their mutual rights and responsibilities for support, custody and access/visitation. The forms would not determine the amount or form of support, custody or access, only that both parents are responsible for a child.

Sincerely yours,

–

Your name and address

CAPTA

More than 20 years ago, Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which requires strict reporting of all suspected cases of child abuse. CAPTA provides absolute immunity for those who report suspected abuse, even if the reporting is being done knowing the report is false, or in willful disregard of the truth. H.R. 4 ends 14 child protection programs, including several of which were part of CAPTA, and turns over those child protection programs to the states under block grants. Strict reporting would still be required, but the states would have more flexibility. States could presumably provide penalties for false reporting, or move to provide accountability for those who investigate reports of abuse.

Welfare Reform

(Continued from page 13)

access/visitation counsellor. Such certification, though not required, could provide training and credibility in the running of access programs.

Background

In the 1988 Family Support Act, Congress, with CRC as the catalyst, authorized $2 million in access/visitation "demonstration" grants. The grants, which were for about $300,000 each, were awarded to seven states over a two-year period.

The success of those grants helped convince members of Congress and officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which administered the grants, that access/visitation measures could be effective, low-cost, and helpful to families.

The result is that Congress is now authorizing such grants for all 50 states in the welfare reform/child support bill.

Order CRC Book and Make Money!

One-Time Fundraising Offer Before the CRC Book *The Best Parent is Both Parents* Goes Out of Print in June, 1996!

Order bulk copies (10 or more) of the book for only $4. a copy, resell the copies for the list price of $10. each, and make a profit for you or your organization! If you order 10 copies, you or your organization can make $60. Order 20, 50, or 100 copies, and the profit can be $120, $300, or $600, respectively.

You can also give copies to judges, policymakers, and others to help educate them on the issues of concern to you and CRC.

The reason copies are available at this low price is that the publisher, Hampton Roads Publishing Co., plans to "remainder" (destroy) the 10,000 copies of the book that remain in their warehouse. This is common procedure for books after a certain period.

Because any unsold books will be "remaindered" at the end of June, 1996, CRC and you will only have copies that we obtain from the publisher before then.

"This book will be of interest for several years to come, so I urge everyone to stock up now!" said book editor David L. Levy.

Send checks to CRC, and copies will be mailed to you. For orders of 20 copies or less, add $5. for shipping (to one address). For orders of more than 20 copies, shipping cost is included.

Individual copies will continue to be available from CRC for $10 each, plus $3 for postage, as long as supplies last.

The 157-page book offers tips to parents and professionals on how to maintain involvement by both parents in the event of divorce.

All orders should be addressed to CRC, 220 I Street N.E., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20002.

If you would like copies (individual or bulk order) autographed by David L. Levy, just state to whom you would like it autographed (yourself, perhaps your children–give their names) and your autographed copy will be sent to you.

Announcements

National Congress for Fathers and Children

The National Congress for Fathers and Children (NCFC) will hold its 12th annual convention at the Holiday Inn Holidome in Kansas City, KS, August 8-11, 1996. For conference registrations, phone NCFC at 1-800-733-DADS. The educational conference will focus on the needs of fathers, on improving attorneys' representation for fathers; and second wives. The room rate for conference registrants at the hotel is $65; up to four persons may share a room; phone the hotel at 1-800-527-0582. Childcare will be available at the family-friendly Holidome.

Parents Without Partners

Parents Without Partners (PWP) will hold its 37th International Convention July 2-7, 1996, at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn, Dearborn, Michigan. Workshops, speakers, social activities, an entertaining youth program, will highlight the convention. For information, contact PWP at 401 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611, phone (312) 644-6610. PWP will present David L. Levy with a child advocacy award; previous winners of the award were Sally Struthers and Captain Kangaroo.

Correction

A article on page 5 of Speak Out for Children, Fall/Winter 1995 should have referred to "2.3 **million** custodial mothers and their children."

Alaska

2 Parents by 2000

CRC is pursuing a new initiative, "2 Parents by 2000", a drive to assure that all children in America have two parents by the year 2000. "Single parents do all they can for their children in a difficult situation, and many children of single parents turn out fine, but children with two parents generally do better in school, have higher self-esteem, and avoid drugs and crime more than children raised by single parents," said CRC President, David L. Levy.

Buffington

CRC plans, with its chapters, to hold a series of town-hall meetings to form a grass-roots effort to promote the "2 Parents by 2000" drive.

Not all children will be able to have 2 parents by the year 2000, but the goal will be to assure good parenting for as many children as possible.

The Alaska CRC chapter is planning a grassroots townhall meeting in late October, 1996, in Anchorage. Diana Buffington, CRC Alaska coordinator, plans to invite members of the public, including school administrators, family law attorneys, employers, legislators, and representatives of the Alaska Federation of Natives, to a series of discussions over several days, a kind of "mini-convention," to discuss ways to encourage parenting by both parents in the event of divorce.

"We have a number of legislators interested in CRC's child support guideline, kinship care, mediation, parenting education, and joint custody, so these will be among the topics to be discussed at the 2 Parents by 2000 sessions," said Buffington. She hopes that media coverage of the sessions will increase public awareness of issues affecting children.

New York

From War to Peace

For the past year, CRC of New York and the United Health Services, a local health care corporation, have held a monthly parent education seminar, entitled From War to Peace. CRC of New York State administers the program and has hired two mental health professionals to act as facilitator for the three-hour program.

Boedecker-Frey

It took almost three years to convince the local Family Court that the program was a worthwhile venture, said Kim Boedecker-Frey, CRC New York State coordinator. Once the three judges agreed to refer litigants to From War to Peace, the local health care corporation (which consists of three hospitals, a nursing home, and physicians groups) agreed to provide free space and handle registrations.

From War to Peace borrowed from several successful programs, such as those in Wyandotte County, Kansas and the PEACE Program of Hofstra University.

More than 60 pages of information are provided to each participant, and additional free services are offered to individuals with distressing personal issues.

Some parents have resolved their divorce issues without litigation, and others have learned ways to provide less trauma and a healthier post-divorce environment for children.

In the first year, more than 300 parents and grandparents as well as family court judges and attorneys have taken the course. The cost is $30 per person, but a lower fee can be negotiated, according to need. A second program has been launched in Chenango County, and negotiations are underway in three additional counties, in upstate New York and nearby Pennsylvania, said Boedecker-Frey, a psychotherapist, who holds a masters in social work.

CRC Guideline Available

Copies of the model child support guideline prepared by CRC that is based on a child having two parents are still available from the federal government.

This is the first time that the federal government has ever distributed a guideline that takes into account the direct expenditures on a child by the non-custodial parent.

To obtain a copy of the federal publication, phone (202) 401-9383, which is the Office of Child Support Enforcement's Child Support Reference Center, located at 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW, Washington, D.C. 20447. There is no charge for the publication, entitled "Child Support Guidelines: The Next Generation", as long as supplies last.

Copies of the guideline itself as published by the government are available from CRC for $5.00 for CRC members, and $10.00 for non-members, including shipping and handling.

If you would like to contact Don Bieniewicz, author of the guideline, for his assistance in getting this guideline adopted in the states, write him at 10004 Fairoaks Road, Vienna, VA 22181, or phone 703-255-0837 (evenings).

Change of Address

To keep newsletters and other materials coming, please notify CRC three weeks in advance of any address change. Send old and new addresses to CRC, 220 "I" Street N.W., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002.

CRC Goes International– Chapter in Japan

CRC has its first chapter in a foreign country. Walter Benda and Brian Thomas, both of whom have been denied access to their children in Japan, have started a chapter in Japan. Walter is the father of two girls and Brian is the father of a boy. "We have found a number of other foreigners in Japan who are being denied access to their children by their Japanese spouses," said Benda. Benda is in international trade, while Thomas is an English-language counselor to people in need in Tokyo. Benda said one of the first goals of the group will be to get Japan to join the Hague convention, of which the U.S. and more than 40 countries are members. The Hague Convention addresses problems concerning international kidnapping of children and unlawful retention of children.

Thomas *Benda*

The new CRC coordinator for Georgia is Harry Prillaman, who had been vice-president of CRC of Georgia under Sonny Burmeister. Prillaman, a systems programmer for Advantis Corporation, is the divorced father of Andrew, 7. Prillaman is being assisted by David Raines and other dedicated members of the chapter.

Ted Hill, a non-custodial father who works as a paralegal in the office of CRC General Counsel Mike Oddenino, has started a new CRC chapter in Riverside, CA, near Los Angeles. This is the third CRC chapter in California (see addresses on page 17).

(Continued on page 17)

Inside CRC

Intellectual Property Protection

Charlie Ruggiero, who obtained trademark protection for the name and logo "Children's Rights Council" and the name and logo for our newsletter "Speak Out for Children" is a specialist in trademark, patent, copyright, and licensing law. He is a partner in the law firm of Ohlandt, Greeley and Ruggiero, 1 Landmark Square, Suite 903, Stamford, CT 06901, telephone (203) 327-6067.

CRC on Internet

Interest in CRC on the Internet is growing. Bruce Kaskubar, CRC coordinator in Minnesota has placed CRC on the Internet Worldwide Web. For those of you with a browser, the home page's URL is http://www.vix.com/crc/aboutcrc.htm. Bruce would like to field questions from individuals, as well as members of other groups who are interested in CRC.

Beat the Tax Man: Contribute to CRC

If you wish to consider leaving a bequest or property to CRC, please let CRC know of your generosity.

Contact your accountant or tax advisor on the best way to structure any such bequest.

Or contact CRC, and we can suggest an accountant or tax advisor to assist you.

Donors are Appreciated

CRC thanks everyone who contributed to CRC in the charity drive that took place in all federal government offices in the Fall of 1995.

CRC is listed as number 1513 in the Children's Charities of America listing, which is part of the Independent Charities of America. We also thank those who contribute to CRC in the Washington, D.C., and San Francisco (Bay Area) United Way campaigns.

We also thank those who contribute to CRC through their United Way in some other part of the country, where we are not listed, but where employers may sometimes allow employees to designate CRC.

CRC also appreciates all those who contribute to CRC through the Global Focus credit card campaign run by MBNA America Bank, in Newark, Delaware. CRC depends on volunteer help and contributions for its existence.

If you wish to make your tax-deductible contribution direct to CRC, send it to CRC, 220 I Street, Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Superfood for Health

For vibrant health, write or call to CRC for a free tape about blue-green algae and other natural superfoods.

70% of the earth's biomass is algae. 90% of the oxygen we breathe is proceed by algae. Comestible blue-green algae are among the oldest and most nutrient-dense superfoods known. A powerful source of balanced amino-acid protein, chelated minerals and trace elements, natural vitamins, anti-oxidant enzymes, omega 3 & 6, chlorophyll, beta-carotene, b-12 and pure elemental life energy. Most people who eat this original superfood report more vitality, mental clarity, endurance and zest–the ancient food that our future may depend on.

The company that sells this product is Cell Tech, based in Klamath Falls, Oregon. A portion of all sales go to CRC.

CRC Goes International

(Continued from page 16)

If you live in a state where there is a CRC chapter, we urge you to join the chapter. In this way, you will be networking with a chapter and national CRC to reform custody laws and attitudes around the country. By becoming a member of the chapter, you also become a member of national CRC.

Note: CRC's name is protected by federal trademark law.

National Affiliate Organizations and Chapters

National Affiliate Organizations

Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC)
Jennifer Isham, president
P.O. Box 27417
Houston, TX 77227-7418
1-800-457-MWOC
Joint membership in MW/OC and CRC: $35.00 a year

Parents Without Partners (PWP)
Linda Napolitano, president
401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
312-644-6610
Members of PWP join CRC for only $20.00 a year.

Stepfamily Association of America (SAA)
Judith L. Bauersfeld, Ph.D., president
215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 212
Lincoln, Nebraska 66505
(402) 477-7837
Joint membership in SAA and CRC: $35.00 for the first year
TELL THE ABOVE ORGANIZATION THAT YOU WANT A JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN THEIR GROUP AND IN CRC

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Walter Benda
P.O. Box 583
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(540) 637-3799
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Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711-2961
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(307) 687-8558

For development of chapters in states:
* **west of the Mississippi** that do not yet have any CRC chapters, contact chapter coordinator Eric Anderson, 12103 Scribe Drive, Austin, TX 78759, phone (512) 836-6621
* **east of the Mississippi** that do not yet have CRC chapters, contact chapter coordinator Michael Ewing, 3029 Yakima Road, Chesapeake, VA 23325, phone (804) 543-5993, fax -1261.

Ask Messrs. Ewing or Anderson for a copy of the 100-page CRC booklet that explains everything you need to know about affiliation. Enclose $10.00 for photocopying and postage.
To form additional chapters in states that already have one or more chapters, contact the state coordinator or existing state chapter head listed above.

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Here are *some* **SPECIAL ADDITIONS** to the

Children's Rights Council

1996

CATALOG OF RESOURCES for parents and professionals

The CRC Catalog lists more than 100 books, written reports, audio-cassettes, modelbills, and gifts for children. Members can receive additional free copies of the catalog by contacting CRC. Non-members can order one for $1. write to: CRC, 220 I Street, NE, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002-4362.

Putting Kids First

By Michael L. Oddenino

CRC's General Counsel

The book offers a children's Bill of Rights, a sample Custody Agreement, and Ten Suggestions for keeping kids out of post-divorce conflicts. A must for people interested in child and family welfare!

153 pages, illustrated, hardback, $16.95

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The Parental Alienation Syndrome,
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348 pages, $30.00 hardback.

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Publisher Close-Out One-Time Only

The CRC Book – *"The Best Parent is Both Parents"*

Bulk copies for $4 each. Sell them for $10 and make a profit. Send check to CRC by June 15, 1996

Healing from Divorce: Healing Wounded Hearts

by Elizabeth Hickey

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A Hole in My Heart
By Claire Berman, 286 pages, softback, $10.00

Fathers Rights
The Source Book for Dealing with the Child Support System
By John Conine, 220 pages, hardback, $19.00

Don't Blame Me, Daddy
False Accusations of Child Sexual Abuse
By Dean Tong, 214 pages, softback, $12.00

Leslee Newman, an attorney in California who has expertise in move-away issues, will give a free 15 to 30 minute consultation to CRC members on move-away issues. Phone Leslee Newman at (714)282-1515

New CRC Directory

The 6th edition of CRC's "Parenting International Directory" is now available. The directory lists about 1,200 organizations in the U.S. and abroad involved in custody reform, mediation, parenting, and financial child support.

Order your copy of the sixth edition in hardcopy or on disc. IBM 3 1/2" HD disc will be provided unless 5 1/4" HD or DD disc is specifically requested.

The price is $12.00for CRC members, and $15.00 for non-members.

Send any additions, corrections or deletions for the Directory to Paul Robinson, 3702 Melrose Avenue, Forestville, MD 20747, or by fax (301) 568-5812. Paul Robinson helped to prepare the directory for CRC.

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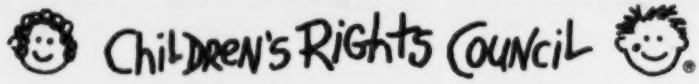

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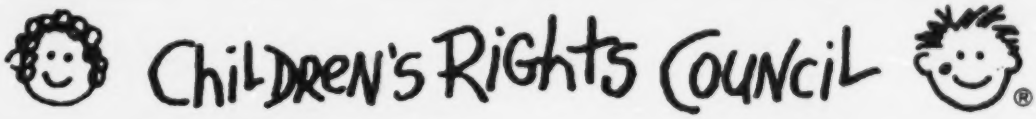

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Strengthening Families Through Education

Summer 1996

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Landmark Divorce Study Wrong 1
1996 Conference 4
Audio Tapes 5
President's Message 8
Family Facts 9
In the Courts 10
Bills and Resolutions 11
Chapter News 14
Around the Country 15
Inside CRC 16
List of Chapters 17
Thank You 18
Catalog of Resources 19
New Parenting Directory 19

Landmark Divorce Study had the Numbers Wrong

By Katharine Webster
The Associated Press

(This story appeared over the national AP wire in May, 1996, and was published in various newspapers. Reprinted here with permission).

Boston–It was a jaw-dropping statistic, widely influential in the movement to change America's divorce and child-support laws.

Eleven years ago, sociologist Lenore Weitzman published "The Divorce Revolution," a ground-breaking study of California's no-fault divorce system. In it, she reported that women's households suffered a 73 percent drop in their standard of living in the first year after divorce, while men's households enjoyed a 42 percent rise.

Since then, the figures have been quoted hundreds of times in newspapers, politicians' speeches and court rulings.

There's only one problem: her figures are wrong.

Richard Peterson, a New York sociologist who reanalyzed Weitzman's data from computer and paper records archived at Radcliffe College's Murray Research Center, found a 27 percent decline in women's post-divorce standard of living and a 10-percent increase in men's–still a serious gap, but not the catastrophic one that Weitzman saw.

Weitzman, a professor of sociology and law at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., now acknowledges her figures were wrong. She blames the loss of her original computer data file, a weighting error or a mistake in the computer calculations performed by a Stanford University research assistant.

But "I'm responsible–I reported it," she says.

Peterson went back and checked Weitzman's conclusions because they were so much at odds with what other researchers had found and because they conflicted with some of her own data. For several years after the publication of her book, she did not make her

(Continued on page 3)

Interns help CRC (see story on page 8)

As long as supplies last! Bulk copies of CRC book $4 each (for the purchase of 10 or more copies). See page 19 for order details.

"Speak Out for Children" is published by the Children's Rights Council, Inc. Editor: David L. Levy. Contributors to this Issue: Don Bieniewicz, Paul Robinson, Harvey Walden; college student interns Aimee Barnel, University of Iowa; Paige Cooney, Colgate University; Beth Cowan, University of Texas; Tatjana Feinstein, University of Texas; Michelle Jensen, University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School; Kim Nielsen, Indiana University; Christi Papenbrock, Fairfield University; Sarah Pieczynski, University of Iowa; Stephanie Klose, University of New York at Albany; Catherine M. Reese, Catholic University, Columbus School of Law; Johanna Wilson, University of California-Irvine. Newsletter layout by Kathleen L. Ballard.

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About CRC

The Children's Rights Council (CRC) is a nationwide, nonprofit IRS 501(c)(3) children's rights organization based in Washington, D.C.

CRC works to strengthen families through education and advocacy. We favor family formation and family preservation, but if families break up, or are never formed, we work to assure a child the frequent and continuing contact with two parents and extended family the child would normally have during a marriage. Our motto is "The Best Parent is Both Parents."

For the child's benefit, CRC favors parenting education before marriage, during marriage, and in the event of separation. We work to demilitarize divorce between parents who are involved in marital disputes, substituting conciliation and mediation for the adversarial process, and providing for comprehensive child support. We also favor school-based programs for children at risk.

Formed in 1985 by concerned parents who have more than 40 years collective experience in divorce reform and early childhood education, CRC has chapters in 30 states and three national affiliate organizations: Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC), Parents Without Partners (PWP), and the Stepfamily Association of America (SAA).

Prominent professionals in the fields of religion, law, social work, psychology, child care, education, business, and government comprise our Advisory Panel.

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Johns Hopkins University and Hospital Baltimore, Maryland

Linda Napolitano, President
Parents Without Partners International

Hon. Fred Thompson
U.S. Senator (R-TN)

Divorce Study

(Continued from page 1)

data available to other researchers; she explained there were errors in the master computer data file that she wanted to correct first.

Peterson's research and Weitzman's response will be published in the American Sociological Review in June.

The publicity that greeted Weitzman's findings are similar to what occurred after a 1986 study said that if a college-educated white woman hasn't married by age 40, she has only a 1-to-100 chance of getting hitched. That figure was later discredited, but not before a Newsweek cover story declared that a 40-year-old woman had a better chance of being killed by a terrorist than of getting married.

The dispute over Weitzman's standard-of-living figures is more than just academic.

A search of the Nexis data base found more than 175 newspaper and magazine stories citing Weitzman's numbers. Peterson says he also found citations in 348 social science articles, 250 law review articles and 24 appeals and Supreme court cases. The statistic even appeared in President Clinton's 1996 budget.

Weitzman's figures have been cited by policymakers and others as hard evidence of what's become known as the "feminization of poverty," and her book is credited with helping bring about stricter child-support enforcement and more flexible property-division laws around the country.

Moreover, in a recent essay, Susan Faludi, feminist author of "Backlash," called Weitzman's statistic "the centerpiece for recent attacks on no-fault divorce."

In the past year, several states, including Michigan and Iowa, have considered a return to fault-based divorce, in which one spouse must assert adultery, cruelty or some other type of wrongdoing.

But Weitzman, her critics and other divorce scholars say no-fault divorce is not to blame for some women's economic plight. Peterson says research on both fault and no-fault systems has found similar gaps, about a 30 percent drop in women's standard of living and a 10 percent rise in men's.

Weitzman says it was the accompanying economic changes, originally intended to foster greater equality, that hurt women and children.

Those changes included requiring equal division of the marital property instead of giving judges discretion, and basing alimony and child support strictly on need and ability to pay instead of fault.

"Judges were giving women equality with a vengeance, telling them they were equally responsible for their support...at a time when they still had responsibility for children and didn't have the work experience of their former husbands," she says.

Also judges often required the immediate sale of the family home so assets could be split equally between husband and wife. That means the children were uprooted and forced to move to a new house and sometimes a new school, Weitzman says.

She says her book helped bring about changes in California and elsewhere, including better child-support enforcement and laws allowing judges to delay the sale of the family home until the children are grown.

(Editor's note: CRC analysts and other researchers around the country knew the figures were wrong from the beginning, e.g., Jed Abraham, who was an executive member of the ABA Section on Family Law Child Custody committee, wrote a law review article questioning the figure, which became CRC Report R121).

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I'm sorry I could not attend your 10th national conference in Atlanta, but I had to testify as an expert in a child custody case that week.

America has to get back to the idea that children have two parents. And parents and grandparents must learn to get along with each other, for the sake of the children.

Congratulations, CRC, for all the good work you are doing to help bring this about.

Lynda Carter Cajoleas, RN, MSW
Roswell, Georgia

Editor:

I admired both Sonny Burmeister and Elaine Majewski, who died recently, and who were both incredibly vital, productive CRC activists.

Sonny and Elaine made positive contributions to children and families in America. People who will never know them benefitted from their work. I thank them.

Richard Martin
Bedminster, NJ

(Editor's note: Sonny headed CRC's Georgia chapter, and Elaine and husband Bruce Gillman were organizers of the New Jersey Council for Children's Rights, a CRC chapter).

CRC Conference Held in Atlanta

About 200 people attended CRC's 10th national conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Atlanta on April 24-28, 1996. They came from 40 states and two foreign countries (Japan and Germany).

Panel discussions at the conference included move-away issues, a unified family court system, financial and emotional child support, and political issues facing families,

Speakers at the conference included Melinda Blau, Bev Bradburn-Stern, Richard Gardner, John Guidubaldi, Mavis Hetherington, Wade Horn, David Gray Ross, Murray Straus and Richard Warshak.

This was the first CRC conference to be held outside of the Washington, D.C., area.

More 1996 Conference news will be in our next issue of this newsletter.

Some Conference Highlights

Parental Alienation

Wagner

Barbara Wagner, forensic and clinical psychologist, Los Angeles, California, was on a panel that discussed Parental Alienation, Child Abuse and Domestic Violence: How Those Issues Affect Children Wagner said:

➢"Visualize a tightrope. On either side is a father and mother, supporting the tightrope the child is on: Picture the child trying to do the balancing act between two parents. When alignment occurs, sometimes this child will be a little more over to one side of the tightrope than the other. Think of alignment on the pole, and alienation, the extreme on the other pole. How does that process occur? Sometimes I think that's a pre-existing condition in marriage. Sometimes it occurs by complementary roles in parenting, by the unconscious needs of one parent or another, and by other factors such as each parent's individual parentalogical and personality structure...

➢"I view the process of parental alienation as a shift of passion from one of love to hate. It is actually a disturbance in the balance of harmony and that disturbance is created by aggression and destruction.

➢"The dynamics in a divorcing family create the following: family members feel subhuman and alone; there is a destruction of a shared fantasy; happily ever after has dissipated, there is a cessation of cooperation and empathy, particularly between the divorcing parents.

➢"We can try to blame all of this on the litigation process, but in paternity as well as matrimony, there's a third person in all of these relationships at the time of birth and or when the vows are said. Sometimes we forget this little factor. I believe that in the dissolution process there is also expectation of battle that is not only involved in the system, but it's also part of our collective consciousness.

➢"Thus, there is a creation of hatred which manifests in alienation of one parent from another. When does hatred become pathological?...The wounds (of separation and loss) are accompanied by feelings of humiliation, shame, and helplessness. And these are projected because they're unacceptable. I cannot accept that about myself, so I shoot it off, usually to my former spouse and the other parent.

➢"That creates an alien enemy who is somebody over there and so distant from me that I can justify the aim of hatred. What does hatred do for us in a divorcing family? It destroys the enemy and it restores what we believe will be balance and harmony. Of course the process of parental alienation may exist for the parent, but it doesn't exist for the child.

➢"What purpose does hatred serve? Hate, bitterness and contempt serve a number of purposes in our life, it's a defense against envy. It protects our sense of 'good self/good parent," it fulfills fantasies of revenge, it is a way of organizing our personal and parental identity. If I'm the good parent, then aren't I really good? The preservation of meaning in our lives and the avoidance of separation anxiety. That of course is the avoidance of a sense of loss and divorce.

➢How does this affect children? Children of divorce develop phenomenal coping skills which I believe are predicated on access to both parents. From my experience, children who are aligned with one parent (against the other), have difficulty facing life's challenges.

"They exhibit the following: they avoid making decisions; they feel threatened by change; they demonstrate limited problem solving skills; they display impulsivity and often poor judgment; they blame others for their lack of accomplishments and successes; they often show physical symptoms of stress; they cannot establish goals or articulate commonly held positive values, etc. Those are the effects of toxic hatred that occurs in the process of alienating a child from the other parent."

Communication Skills

Blakely

Mary Blakely, learning specialist, lecturer, author, and CEO of Azuray Learning Inc., in

(Continued on page 6)

AVAILABLE ON AUDIO CASSETTE

Children's Rights Council's 10th National Conference ... Valuing Families
April 24 -28, 1996 — Atlanta, GA

__CRC01 Parenting Alienation Syndrome (PAS) and The differentiation between Real and False Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse: Gardner, Richard M.D. (part 1 of 2)
__CRC02 Parenting Alienation Syndrome (PAS) and The differentiation between Real and False Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse: Gardner, Richard M.D. (part 2 of 2)
__CRC03 How to Start and Grow a CRC Chapter; Programs and Services: Kaskubar, Bruce; Martin, Richard; and Ewing, Michael
__CRC04 Working with Courts and Commissions: Ewing, Cindy
__CRC05 Working with your State Legislators and Congress: Ell, Ted; Walden, Harvey; Anderson, Eric, and Earnhardt, Kent .
__CRC06 Working with the Media: Romano, Dominick and Dinn, David
__CRC07 Conducting Research and Documenting Evidence of Problems of Bias: Bauserman, John; Bieniewicz, Don; and Garrod, David
__CRC08 Children of Divorce: Neuman, Gary M (part 1 of 2)
__CRC09 Children of Divorce: Tharpe, Janet (part 2 of 2)
__CRC10 The Family Friendly Court System - It's Mission, Structure, Resources and Services: McIsaac, Hugh , Odenino, Michael L; Messinger, Steven J; and Ricci, Isolina
__CRC11 Shared Parenting (Joint Custody) Physical and Legal: What it is, What Works, and What Doesn't: Cook, James A; Gadrix, Ed; Guidubaldi, John; Hetherington, Mavis; and Termini, Ann Marie (part 1 of 2)
__CRC12 Shared Parenting (Joint Custody) Physical and Legal: What it is, What Works, and What Doesn't: Cook, James A; Gadrix, Ed; Guidubaldi, John; Hetherington, Mavis; and Termini, Ann Marie (part 2 of 2)
__CRC13 Valuing Families - The Media and the Family: Blau, Melinda; Mr. Moby
__CRC14 Keynote Address: Speaker to be announced.

CRC VALUING FAMILIES 1996

__CRC15 The Move-Away Case: The Important Factors in Dealing with a Significant Geographic Move by One Parent: Cohen, Miriam; Gold, Harold; Hetherington, Mavis; Stettner, Pamela; and Zapf, Charles
__CRC16 Mediation as an Alternative to Litigation Wars: Hickey, Elizabeth; Gibson, Kathryn; and Myers, JoAnne.
__CRC17 Child Custody Evaluations - The Role of the Experts: Eisenberg, Don; Guidubaldi, John; Hale, Vallery, and Warshak, Richard
__CRC18 How to Improve State Child Support Guidelines and Performance: Bieniewicz, Don; Flohr, Sara; and Ross, David Gray
__CRC19 Politics and the Family - Federal and State Policies and Their Impact on Families: Haskins, Ron; Henry, Ron; and Horn, Wade
__CRC20 Parenting Issues After Divorce: How to do it Right: Bradford-Stern, Bev; Glinka, Deborah; Major, Jayne and Ricci, Isolina
__CRC21 Parental Alienation, Child Abuse and Domestic Violence: How these Issues Affect Children: Sauber, Richard; Straus, Murray; Tong, Dean and Wagner, Barbara
__CRC22 Men's and Women's Issues as they Affect Children of Divorce: Ballard, Travis; Bonhomme, Jean; Engel, Margorie; Harrington, Bill; and Leving, Jeffery
__CRC23 The Michigan Friend of the Court System, a Model We Can Learn From and Improve: Casey, Laurie; Holmen, Phil; Johnson, Marie and Radditz, Matthew
__CRC24 Corporal Punishment - Spanking of Children and its effect on Marriages: Straus, Murray.
__CRC 25 Minority Citizens - Non Custodial Mothers, Custodial Fathers, Step-Parents and Grandparents: Berryhill, Kay and Ray; Devino, Helen; Devino, Jerry; Fuller, Nancy B and Iohns, Jennifer
__CRC26 Empowering the Reform Movement: Henry, Ron and Levy, David.

"Train Up A Child In The Way He Should Go....."
Proverbs 22: 6

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Communication Skills

(Continued from page 4)

Kalamazoo, MI, said:

➢developing communication skills between separating parents is essential, and that

➢divorce is an issue of the heart. We must "look at the who, not just the what. All people have a child inside. Many adults have a damaged kid inside." Her first question to people is "who are you really?" followed by, "What do you think of yourself? Do you love yourself?"

➢children become an extension of the adult, that is , to lose the children takes away from the adult so they must prevent the loss by fighting.

➢"99 percent of the people who come to me for mediation are in fear." Parents need to understand that children mourn. They may change behaviors, due to relief of stress, but that's not real understanding.

➢parents often say that their kids 'understand what's going on,' but that is often not the case.

➢support groups are important, and mediation is work. "Mediators must guide"

➢people who are hostile and yelling are not allowed to raise their voices while in mediation.

➢people must "work on getting rid of crutches. Therapists and mediators work very differently."

Financial Support

A panel on child support consisted of David Gray Ross, director of the federal child support office; Don Bieniewicz, author of the CRC child support guideline published by the federal government, and Sara Flohr, a member of the New Jersey Commission to Study the Laws of Divorce.

Ross said:

➢counting state employees, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement has 55,000 employees, and an annual $1.5 billion budget.

➢"At the moment, everybody loves us. Congress loves us, the White House loves us, because we are a program that is cost effective and helps children. I'm not saying everybody loves us, but in terms of political structure, we are a very popular program.

➢it has been his effort, as agency head, to include fathers in every decision we make. We're not a collection agency like the IRS. We are a program that's designed to benefit children. From the very first day, I think a number of people were surprised when I indicated that it was my position that all children deserve two parents and four grandparents.

➢In President Clinton's first state of the union address in 1994, Clinton referred to 'deadbeat dads'. In 1996, his third state of the union address, Clinton challenged fathers "to love and care for their children. If your family is separated, you must pay your child support. We're doing more than ever to make sure that you do. But let's all admit it–a check will never be a substitute for a father's love and guidance, and only you can make the decision to help raise your children. So no matter who you are, it is your most basic duty. Parents raise children, not government."

(Editor's note: Ross did not take credit for this change in attitude by the White House, but CRC knows that Ross has had a positive effect, as has Bill Galston, who until last year was a Domestic Policy Advisor to Clinton).

Ross also said that:

➢as a judge for 26 years in Maryland, he confronted child support issues on a regular basis, and does not personally favor a national child support guideline, because the cost of living differs from place to place;

➢he recommends more training of judges at all level so that judges may operate more freely under the guidelines, know that they can deviate from them, know that they can listen to individual cases. It is what our justice system is all about;

➢he is convinced we will never have a successful child support program until we have voluntary compliance by the majority of the population and we simply don't have that at the moment. We won't succeed until both men and women perceive the child support office as being a fair office, a helpful office, one which will look at the needs of the children, including downward modifications. I'm doing my best with that. Those close to me are doing that, but I'll be the first to admit it doesn't go down that far.

➢he was in another state talking about access and visitation and one of the leaders of the child support program there said, "Judge, we know you are under a lot of pressure on this stuff. Why don't you tell us who is causing it and we'll apply our own political pressure to get us out of the business of access and visitation." It was one of the few times I flew into a rage, as he explained to his employee that he was the one promoting access and visitation. It is not just a matter of money, as the President says, it's a matter of re-unifying families. We have to come to grips with what is the family these days.

Sonny Burmeister

The conference was infused with feelings of loss–the remembrances for Sonny Burmeister, longtime CRC activist, and head of CRC's Georgia chapter, who died in a fall from a ladder on February 26, 1996.

Some CRC activists visited Sonny's gravesite in Roswell, Georgia, several miles from the conference hotel. They held hands in a circle around the site, where they prayed and related moving and often humorous reminiscences of Sonny.

Then, at an appropriate moment, bagpipes sounded in the distance.

The next night, at the banquet on Saturday, April 17, Candace

(Continued on page 8)

Awards

CRC presented "Healer", Best in Media and Parenting Awards at the Conference. All the awards were engraved plaques, unless specified below.

"Healer" Awards

When Warren Burger was Chief Justice of the United States, he urged lawyers to be healers, not just litigators.

CRC gave "healer" awards, to

➢**Texas State Senator Chris Harris** and

➢**Texas State Representative Toby Goodman,**

➢**Washington, D.C. Councilman Harold Brazil**, and

➢**Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry**.

Harris

Goodman

Brazil

Barry

for their efforts to assure a child's right to two parents in Texas.

Harris and Goodman were the prime sponsors of the joint custody bill that took effect in Texas on September 1, 1996. The bill tells judges to presume that joint custody is in the best interests of the child.

Harris and Goodman could not attend the conference, but were presented with their awards by Eric Anderson, CRC Texas coordinator, at a ceremony in Texas, following the conference.

Brazil was the sponsor of the joint custody bill, and Barry was instrumental in obtaining needed support for the measure on the Council, and in enthusiastically signing the bill.

The bill, which became law on April 18, 1996, states there is a rebuttable presumption that joint custody is in the best interests of children.

Brazil and Barry were presented their awards at ceremonies in Washington, D.C., after the conference.

Best in Media

CRC gave a Best in Media Award to

➢**William Raspberry**, longtime syndicated columnist, for his body of columns that demonstrate the need of children for two parents. Raspberry, whose home newspaper is the Washington Post, was presented with his award after the conference in Washington, D.C. .

Raspberry

➢**Bye Bye Love**, a 1995 movie that involved cases of drop off and pick up of children and showed, in the process, the need of children for both their mothers and their fathers post divorce. CRC also presented an award to **McDonald's Corporation** for their contributions to the film. Lisa White of McDonald's Atlanta office accepted the award on behalf of Deborah Quig of McDonald's national marketing division.

In addition, certificates were presented to **Gary David Goldberg, Rob Reiner, Sam Weisman**, and **Brad Hall** for their contributions to the film.

The certificates were mailed to them by Kris Kline, CRC's Florida coordinator, who arranged for the presentations.

Parenting Awards

➢**Gary Kretchmer**, director of the Domestic Court Services staff of Johnson County, Kansas, for mediation and child custody evaluations that have helped thousands of parents resolve disputes by settlement rather than litigation. Gary accepted the award in person. Several members of Kretchmer's staff, Terri Dichiser, Janice Fountain, Angie Smith and Evan Ash, received the award with Kretchmer.

Kretchmer

Levy's Remarks

At the banquet, CRC President David L. Levy asked how many people in the audience were Star Trek fans. Many hands were raised. Levy noted that in one of the earlier episodes of the original Star Trek, Captain Kirk, Mr. Spock and the crew of the Enterprise visited a planet where the inhabitants were all so spiritual that they did not need their bodies. They assumed

(Continued on page 8)

CRC Wins Awards

CRC has won two awards recently: Parents Without Partners International gave a **"Distinguished Service to Children"** award to CRC and its president, David L. Levy, at their 37th international conference in Dearborn, Michigan, and The National Parents Day Coalition gave a **Legislative Achievement** award to CRC at a luncheon at the National Press Club in July. Levy and the other National Parents Day Coalition award winners visited with First Lady Hillary Clinton at the White House the following day.

More news on these awards in our next newsletter.

Clinton Sends Message to Candlelight Vigil

"I am proud to stand with you in your commitment to putting the needs of our children first," President Clinton said in a message to the CRC 1996 Candlelight Vigil held outside the statehouse in Atlanta, Georgia on April 26, 1996.

About 200 people under a clear sky heard Michael Ewing, coordinator of CRC chapters east of the Mississippi, read the president's message, which said in part, "As we approach the twenty-first century, now more than ever we must reaffirm our commitment to providing our children with the love and support they need."

Bev Musseter, L.C.S.W. of Indiana, was the main speaker on the needs of children and families. Ben Huston of Tennessee, who sang at the White House in December, 1995, sang "The Wind Beneath My Wings" and other songs.

Harry Prillaman, CRC coordinator in Georgia, read a message from Governor Zel Miller and Kent Earnhardt read a message from Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell.

Candles were lit of behalf of the 6,600,000 children whose access to their non-custodial parents is interfered with by custodial parents.

A state by state roll call of children whose access is interfered with was then read (see roll call of states in previous issues of "Speak Out for Children").

Cindy Ewing, CRC coordinator in Virginia, coordinated the vigil.

Burmeister

(Continued from page 6)

Schooley, Sonny's fiance, spoke eloquently. She touched on all of Sonny's qualities: his longtime advocacy for children and families, his willingness to work hard, and to ask the same of others, his incredible energy, productivity, compassion, encouragement, warmth, and spirituality.

Interns Help CRC

(See page 1 photo)

CRC interns in the photo on page 1, back row, left to right, Johanna Wilson, Christi Papenbrock, Stephanie Klose, Michelle Jensen, Catherine Reese, Aimee Barnel, Sarah Pieczynski, front row left to right, Tatjana Feinstein, Kim Nielson, Paige Cooney, Beth Cowan. See their university affiliations listed on page 2.

Three of the interns, Catherine Reese, Michelle Jensen, and Johanna Wilson, won scholarships from their universities for the internships to help cover living expenses in Washington.

"We have had college student interns every Spring, Fall, and Summer semester for CRC," said CRC President David L. Levy, "but this is the first time interns have won scholarships, and not just one intern obtained a scholarship, but three!"

Reese was one of 10 winners out of 40 Catholic University students in Washington, D.C. who sought a scholarship by a vote of the student body, after she described her planned internship for CRC on projects to help promote the 2-parent family in the event of divorce.

"That sends a signal of the importance of the two-parent family, and CRC, to Catholic University University students," said Reese.

Students from around the country come to Washington for a semester or a summer through an American University college student program, and a program run by the Washington Center, that also brings students to Washington.

Students attend classes and lectures part of the time, and pick a Congressman or a public interest group such as CRC to work with.

Interns help plan events, meetings, attend Congressional hearings, and help in the CRC office.

Some of the intern activities this summer included:

1) Participating in the Stand for

(Continued on page 11)

O'Malley Wins!!

David L. O'Malley, a member of the Children's Rights Council of New Jersey, a chapter of CRC, won the framed reproduction of "Tete" by Pablo Picasso. O'Malley, who did not attend the conference, had purchased his raffle tickets through the mail. The reproduction was presented to O'Malley after the conference.

Levy's Remarks

(Continued from page 7)

bodily form only for the convenience of meeting human visitors such as the crew of the Enterprise.

Then Levy asked how many people had read James Redfield's best-selling book "The Celestine Prophecy." Many had. Levy said that the point of the book is that people are gradually growing "lighter" and more spiritual, and that by sometime in the next millennium, people may not need their bodily forms.

The act of Jesus walking on water was an example of the "lightness" and spirituality cited in "The Celestine Prophecy," Levy noted.

As we approach that period in history, the book says that people will not need to control or impose their will on other people, but will bring out the best qualities in others, and encourage the maximum human potential of everyone else.

Levy said that "CRC activists are already working to bring out the best in others, and expressing the needs of those who often cannot speak–the children. CRC activists are thus already expressing the worth and spirituality talked about in 'The Celestine Prophecies.'"

FAMILY FACTS

Photocopy and distribute the "Family Facts" on the next page! Use as hand-outs when visiting the Legislature, disseminating information to the courts or the media, or as a resource for testimony and Letters to the editor. "Family Facts" will be a regular feature of this Newsletter. Send us your verified facts (with actual copies, sources and dates) to Family Facts, CRC.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Family Facts

Dark Legacy

University of Nebraska-Lincoln sociologists Paul R. Amato and Bruce Keith analyzed findings of 37 studies of over 81,000 individuals and discovered pattern that suggests parental divorce (or permanent separation) has broad negative consequences for quality of life in adulthood:

> more depression, low life satisfaction, low marital quality, low educational attainment, lower income, lower occupational prestige, more health problems and intergenerational transmission of divorce.

[Source: Paul R. Amato and Bruce Keith, "Parental Divorce and Adult Well-Being: A Meta-analysis", Journal of Marriage and Family 53 (1991): 43-58.]

Desperately Seeking

Professor Paul Pearsall of Henry Ford College, interviews with adolescent boy gang members:

> may be seeking kind of rituals that families provide, almost never had family ritual system in home, gangs' rituals become substitutes, fulfill needs for predictability and control.

[Source: Paul Pearsall, "The Power of the Family: Strength, Comfort and Healing (Doubleday: New York, 1990), 43-45]

Divorce Revolution

In her 1985 study "The Divorce Revolution," a study of California's no-fault divorce system, sociologist Lenore Weitzman found a 73 percent drop in women's standard of living in the first year after divorce, while men's households enjoyed a 42 percent rise. Since then, these figures have been quoted hundreds of times in newspapers, politician's speeches and court rulings.

There's only one problem; her figures are wrong, according to an Associated Press report by Katharine Webster in May 1996. In the AP story, Weitzman, now a professor of sociology and law at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA, acknowledges her figures were wrong. There is a drop in women's income post-divorce, and an increase in men's, still a serious gap, but not the catastrophic one that Weitzman saw, says the AP story.

[Source: Katharine Webster, The Associated Press. (Also contact the Children's Rights Council, 220 I Street N.E., Washington, D.C., and ask for Report R121, by Jed Abraham, J.D., that questioned the Weitzman data from the beginning.)]

Cast Out of Eden

Edward W. Beal, psychiatrist, Georgetown Family Center says children of divorce see themselves as being different from children whose families have stayed together:

> unsuccessful, more problem-filled, more anxious, more at risk of failure, robbed of childhood, more frequently depressed, less satisfied in life, less educated, less prestigious jobs, poorer health, undermined sense of security, interrupted routines, loosened underpinnings of life, skepticism.

[Source: Edward W. Beal and Gloria Hochman, "Adult Children of Divorce: Breaking the Cycle and Finding Fulfillment in Love, Marriage and Family" (New York: Delacorte Press, a division of Bantam, Doubleday, Dell Publishing Group, Inc., New York, 1991).]

Relocations With Children–I

A three-step formula frequently used by New York courts in resolving relocation disputes should no longer be used, the New York Court of Appeals ruled on March 26. The formula considered: (1) whether the non-custodial parent would be deprived of "regular and meaningful access to the child;" (2) if this access would be ended, whether the custodial parent can demonstrate exceptional circumstances that would justify the move; and (3) if such circumstances could be demonstrated, whether the child's best interest would be served by the move. However, the Appeals Court said that the formula was "mechanistic," and that the child could be benefited by stabilizing the post-divorce family unit. "In the end, it is for the court to determine, based on all of the proof, whether it has been established by a preponderance of the evidence that the relocation would serve the child's best interests," the Appeals Court said.

One remedy available to courts is to give custody to the non-custodial parent, the Appeals Court said, in a little reported aspect of this case.

[Tropea v. Tropea; NY CtApp, Nos. 1 & 2, 3/26/96]

Relocations With Children–II

Under California law, a custodial parent "has the right to change the residence of the child, subject to the power of the court to restrain a removal that would prejudice the [child's] rights or welfare," the California Supreme Court held on April 15. The state has a statutory policy in favor of a child's "frequent and continuous" contact with both parents. However, the Supreme Court said that the statutory policy did not constrain the court from deciding what custodial arrangement was in the child's best interests. The case involved a custodial mother who wanted to relocate with the children to a town 40 miles from their current home. The father argued that the mother already commuted to her job at the proposed new location, and could continue to do so. The move would prevent him from daily participation in the children's activities, the father argued. However, the Supreme Court said the move would facilitate contacts between the children and their primary caretaker, because her commuting time would be reduced. Courts could not "micromanage" the decisions of a custodial family, the Supreme Court said.

[Burgess v. Burgess; Calif SupCt, No. S046116, 4/15/96]

Relocations With Children–III

The Tennessee Supreme Court held on April 22 that custodial parents are allowed to relocate with the children, unless the non-custodial parent can show that the custodial parent's motives for the move are vindictive, and designed to defeat visitation. The Supreme Court concerned itself with whether a lower court had properly interpreted a previous decision, in which it ruled that the interests of the custodial parent and the child are interrelated, if not always the same. If removal of the child "could pose a specific serious threat of harm to the child," the non-custodial parent might be able to block the removal, the Supreme Court said. The father presented psychological evidence that the child could be harmed by the move, but this did not justify a change of custody, the court said. One justice dissented, arguing that the custodial parent should be required to show that the move would not be adverse to the child.

[Aaby v. Strange; Tenn SupCt, No. 03S01-9507-CH-00073, 4/22/96]

Constitutionality of Child Support Recovery Act

The federal Child Support Recovery Act does not constitute an impermissible intervention by the federal government in domestic relations matters that are within the jurisdiction of the states, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of New York ruled on April 16. Other courts have ruled differently, holding that the interstate commerce clause was too far removed from child support issues to provide a justification for Congress to have passed the Act. However, the New York district court said that the effects upon interstate commerce of the non-payment of support for children living in other states are neither "indirect" nor "remote." Unpaid child support is "a multi-billion dollar annual national problem," the court said, and "such significant non-payment of child support necessarily impacts the flow of goods and services in a national economy." In addition to maintaining that the Act was unconstitutional, the father also argued that the Act, which was aimed at parents who moved to other states to avoid paying child support, was not properly applied to him. It was the mother who had moved, the father pointed out, taking the child from the state where he lived (California) to New York.

[U.S. v. Collins; DC WNY, No. 95-M-1136, 4/16/96]

The cases above are summarized from Family Law Reporter, and appear here by permission from the publisher, The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc.

Change of Address

To keep newsletters and other materials coming, please notify CRC three weeks in advance of any address change. Send old and new addresses to CRC, 220 "I" Street N.W., Suite 140, Washington, DC 20002.

Bills and Resolutions In Congress

Welfare Reform and Child Support

Congress has passed the welfare reform bill, which would allow the states greater flexibility to determine welfare policy. The 600 page bill contained 450 pages on welfare reform and 150 pages on financial child support. There is, however, one provision that provides funds for states to set up access/visitation programs, parenting education programs, mediation, and other services. There was near-unanimous agreement in Congress that the financial child support provisions of the bill, including revocation of drivers' licenses and revocation of passports of delinquent obligors, are good provisions

Even supporters of returning power to the states apparently have no qualms about dictating to the states what their child support policies should be.

There are reasons, however, as to why the government should show more hesitancy in these areas.

CRC suggests you write the following to your Senators and House members:

Write to House members at:
Representative —
(name of your Representative)
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Write to Senators at:
Senator — (name of your Senator)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Write to Congress!

Dear –

I ask you to request that the House Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee and the Senate Finance Committee hold hearings on serious misinformation in the child support area.

Congress should determine how this information got to be so wrong, and how those figures were used to justify bigger government efforts to collect financial child support.

The misinformation includes the following:

1. $5 billion is owed in financial child support, not $34 billion, according to Elaine Sorensen of the Urban Institute, Washington, D.C. author of both the $34 billion and $5 billion figures.

2. Contrary to the report in 1985 by Lenore Weitzman that women suffered a 73 percent drop in their standard of living in the first year after divorce, while men's households enjoyed a 42 percent rise, the correct figure is much less, due to an "error", Weitzman admitted in an Associated Press story in May, 1996.

"It was a jaw-dropping statistic, widely influential in the movement to change America's divorce and child-support laws," the AP said in its story. "There's only one problem: her figures are wrong."

The Congressional hearings should ask:

A. How could the government have been misled by the Sorensen and Weitzman errors?

B. What is being done to correct data collection in the future?

C. Federally funded research shows a better way to assure financial child support–the right of a child to have both of their parents in their lives. Parents want and need the responsibility to be parents, not cash cows or absentee cash registers

Congress should hold hearings on errors in the child support area, and the need to assure emotional as well as financial child support.

Sincerely yours,

–

Note: Let CRC know of the reaction you get.

Thank you.

IT LOOKS LIKE ANY OTHER CREDIT CARD TO YOU, BUT IT'S A DONATION FOR CRC EVERY TIME YOU USE IT!

INTRODUCING THE CRC GOLD CARD and PREFERRED CARD FROM MBNA

Every time you use your CRC VISA card, CRC will receive a contribution at no additional charge to you! Apply today and help CRC! If you're going to carry a card why not carry a CRC card?

Call or Fax CRC for information.
Phone: (202) 547-6227
Fax: (202) 546-4272

Interns Help CRC

(Continued from page 8)

Children March

2) Updating CRC Reports

3) Planning for a dinner celebration of passage of Washington, D.C.'s presumptive joint custody law

4) Planning for National Parents Day

5) Working on CRC's next book on the topic of family breakdown and its effect on children.

Children's Rights Council

(CRC)
Number 1513
In the National Combined Federal Campaign

CHILDREN'S CHARITIES OF AMERICA

We are a member of the Children's Charities of America (CCA). Look for CRC's listing in the index of the CFC Brochure, then turn to the page given for CCA's members. We are number 1513.

YOU MUST DESIGNATE 1513 FOR CRC TO RECEIVE FUNDS.

The Children's Rights Council works to assure that children of separation and divorce obtain as much emotional and financial support as children of intact marriages.

Some of CRC's accomplishments:

- Publicized findings that children with two parents generally have fewer problems with drugs and crime than children with only one parent. Proposed changes in attitudes and laws in order to encourage a child's bonding to two parents and extended family.

- Provided the necessary data that led Congress to provide funds for the first time in history to improve access (visitation) between children and their non-custodial parents.
- Promoted the school based "Banana Splits" program to help children of separation and divorce channel the transition in their lives into stronger academic achievement.
- Award-winner for assisting a county outside Washington, D.C., (Prince George's, MD) in hiring staff to improve bonding between children and their non-custodial parents.

- Won a court case in Ohio upholding a joint custody (shared parenting) agreement approved in Florida between two parents that one of the parents sought to repudiate when the parents moved to Ohio.
- Won a court case in New Jersey upholding a law that allows a judge to give custody to Parent B if Parent A seeks to permanently remove the child to another state without sufficient reason.
- Provided assistance to parents and professionals on how to get through the divorce process in the most peaceful, problem-free way, so as to take the stress out of divorce. Money that would be spent on battling between parents is available for the children.

CRC only receives funds that you actually designate!

DESIGNATE NUMBER 1513 IN THE COMBINED FEDERAL CANPAIGN.

The Children's Rights Council is a national non-profit organization at 220 I St., NE #140, Washington, D.C. 20002-4362. Phone: 202/547-6227 FAX: 202/546-4272. To obtain a copy of our Catalog of Resources, Directory of Parenting Organizations, Affiliation Book, Annual Report, or latest audit, write or call CRC. Thank you.

Please reproduce this flyer and distribute it anywhere in the U.S. to federal offices, U.S. Post Offices, and military bases for the October nationwide federal charity campaign.

All artwork trademarked or trademark pending, CRC

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Children's Rights Council

IN UNITED WAY, WORKPLACE AND CORPORATE CAMPAIGNS CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COUNCIL (CRC)

CRC works to strengthen families through education and advocacy. We favor family formation and family preservation, but if families break up, or are never formed, we work to assure a child the frequent and continuing contact with two parents and extended family the child would normally have during marriage. Our motto is "The Best Parent is Both Parents."

For the child's benefit, CRC favors parenting education before marriage, during marriage, and in the event of separation. We work to demilitarize divorce between parents who are involved in marital disputes, substituting mediation for the adversarial process, and providing for fair financial child support. We also favor school-based programs for children at risk.

There are several ways you can contribute to the Children's Rights Council

- through the Combined Federal Campaign if you work for the federal government at any federal office, post office, or military base. CRC is listed as Number 1513 (the same number as last year) in the Children's Charities of America listing;
- in the Washington, D.C. and San Francisco Bay Area United Way campaigns, where we are also listed as Number 1513

- if you wish to contribute to CRC through a United Way where we are not listed, please ask your employer if you can designate (write in) the Children's Rights Council
- in corporate campaigns, including AARP, CNA Insurance, Lotus Development Corp., KPMG

- if you wish to contribute directly to CRC, write to CRC, 220 "I" Street N.E., Suite 140, Washington, D.C. 20002

Contributions accepted on Visa, MC, or Discovery credit cards.

Visit the Children's Rights Council on the Website: http://www.benefice.com

All contributions are tax-deductible

CHILDREN FIRST! **THANK YOU!**

To join, or for more information, call (202) 547-6227

220 "I" Street N.E. • Suite 140 • Washington, D.C. • 20002 • Telephone (202) 547-6227 • Fax (202) 546-4CRC (4272)

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Maryland Access/Visitation Transfer Center

An access/visitation transfer center for children of separation and divorce will begin soon in Prince George's County, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C.

Walden

Volunteer monitors will be provided by members of CRC of Maryland, said Harvey Walden, CRC Maryland coordinator. Walden has spent about a year obtaining permission from the county's judges and domestic relations masters, and Alfred Ellis, a member of CRC of Maryland, has assisted in making arrangements with a local church to provide a suitable site for the center.

Although some access/visitation transfer centers in the U.S. (also known as neutral drop off and pick up centers) separate the arrival times of the parents, so that, e.g., one parent drops off the child at 6 p.m., and the other parent picks up the child at 6:30 p.m., the judges in Prince George's County want to minimize the time the child is with a stranger–the monitor.

So Walden will allow parents to arrive at the same time, but they will wait in separate locations in the Church.

There will be no charge for either parent utilizing this service; all monitors are volunteers.

The service is expected to start by September, 1996.

California

CRC of California (CRCC) has instituted a "Court Watch" program through its Sacramento chapter and is expanding the program to its other chapters to monitor the Family Laws Courts at Superior Court jurisdictions in the state.

Brown

CRC State Coordinator Patricia Gehlen and state CRC President Will Brown have been meeting with judges in several courts to explain CRCC's focus and personally distribute copies of the national and state newsletters.

CRCC members from various jurisdictions sit in court wearing CRCC name tags and observe family law cases. Although the process is fairly random, emphasis is on observing CRCC members' cases.

Information gathered from the Court Watch program is being factored into CRCC's "Judicial Research Project" which will evaluate:

* the operations of the State Bar and its Family Law Section;
* the selection, public election and confirmation of judges;
* the operations of the state's Commission on Judicial Performance; and
* training of judges and procedures for subsequent evaluations.

State officials have asked CRCC to recommend changes to the judges training program and for input on the gender bias training several court jurisdictions are now requiring of Family Court Services mediators.

Children's Day June 1, 1997

For several years, CRC has observed that although many people have talked of the need for the U.S. to declare a national children's day, no such day has ever been officially declared. CRC is, accordingly, issuing the following proclamation.

PROCLAMATION

Whereas more than 100 countries around the world celebrate a national holiday known as "Children's Day," but the United States does not have such a holiday, and

Whereas many churches in the United States already sponsor "Children's Day" observations on the first or second Sunday in June, and

Whereas the first or second Sunday in June is nestled between mother's day and father's day, where a children's day ought to be, because of the importance of family, and

Whereas every day is children's day, just as every day is mother's day and father's day, there should be a special day to celebrate children, and the enormous contribution they make to our lives, and

Whereas children are our most precious resource, deserving and needing of our love and care, and

Whereas children need the emotional and financial support of their parents, and the caring resources of our communities, schools, and neighborhoods,

We Hereby Declare the first Sunday in June as national children's day. In 1997, that day falls on June 1.

To Celebrate Children's Day, we urge all readers of this proclamation to hold parties, parades, observations, children's activities, family celebrations, and church and synagogue activities on behalf of children on the first Sunday in June.

Stand for Children Day

CRC was a co-sponsor of Stand for Children Day, which drew 200,000 people to Washington on June 1, 1996.

CRC interns carried a banner saying "Children's Rights Council"

(Continued on page 18)

Around the Country

Adoption Law Hurts Children, Increases Welfare Costs

Vermont and several other states have approved a child adoption law that hurts children because it cuts off the rights of unwed fathers to their children and can sometimes cut off the rights of divorced fathers. Also, the law allows an unwed mother who wanted the child adopted to keep the child if the father should step forward to oppose the adoption, even if it means the mother must go on welfare.

Casey

The law was proposed by the Commissioners for Uniform State Laws, a group based in Chicago that recommends "model" legislation for the states to consider.

The "model" bill allows states to reserve the right to relinquish rights and responsibilities of unwed fathers, if the father 1) does not petition the court for acknowledgment of parentage within 72 hours of the child's birth, 2) does not provide financial support for the mother during the pregnancy, and 3) does not establish a relationship with the child.

The criteria for cutting off the rights of divorced fathers is slightly different, i.e., if the father does not participate in the life of the child. There is no question in the law as to why the father is not seeing the child, e.g., whether he is being denied access, as distinguished from not pursuing access voluntarily, said Laurie Casey, a CRC senior policy analyst who opposed adoption of this bill by Vermont in testimony before their legislature this year.

Casey said that the law:

* allows the mother to give up the child after the first 72 hours of birth;

* does not require the mother to disclose the name of the father;

* gives the state the responsibility for an adequate investigation to try to identify the father without embarrassment or detriment to the mother;

* provides no punitive measure or legal recourse if the woman lies.

"Mom can find another boyfriend during her pregnancy, and this boyfriend can say he will pose as the biological father, and agree to the adoption," said Casey. "This is what happened in the Baby Pete case in Vermont, in which the biological father learned of the adoption a year after the adoption occurred. The father subsequently agreed to joint custody with the adoptive parents, even though the adoptive parents didn't have to agree. This was a case where those three people looked after the best interest of the child."

Casey said that once the mother places the child for adoption:

* if the father does not step forward within 72 hours to oppose the adoption, the state reserves the right to extinguish the father's rights;

* if the father does step forward, the mother can say I don't want to go through with the adoption, and the state can give the child back to the mother, until the custody issue is decided.

"They are giving the child back to someone who didn't want the child," said Casey.

If the father does step forward, he will be required to show that "he can provide adequate food, clothing, medical coverage, and housing and that he is capable of providing love and affection," yet there are no such requirements of the mother.

"My gender alone allows me into parentage under this law with no questions asked," said Casey. "I am not required to show that I can provide emotional or financial support for the child. All I need to know is where the local welfare office is. This is a bill that will hurt many children."

Strengthening the Role of Fathers Conference

Vice President Al Gore welcomed several hundred policymakers, scholars and fathers to a May 3 conference on "Strengthening the Role of Fathers in America".

Gore

Co-hosted by the National Performance Review, the Domestic Policy Council, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the conference highlighted recent accomplishments of the President's Fatherhood Initiative and introduced new program ideas from a number of federal agencies.

Gore told the conference "Fathers are more than a paycheck or child support payment."

He said "For too long, fathers have been at the periphery of the debate on families." He urged federal agencies, in setting policy, to seek and to obtain the views of fathers.

(Adapted from the Child Support Report, Office of Child Support Enforcement, June 1996 issue).

Note: Child Support Director David Gray Ross invited CRC President David L. Levy to join him in one of the panel discussions that followed Gore's remarks. Ross and Levy discussed parenting, especially after divorce.

Further note: If you work for a federal agency anywhere in the country, urge the agency to follow through on Gore's recommendation to make the agency more father-friendly. Write to Gore's National Performance Review, the White House, Washington, D.C. 20050, for further information.

CRC Now in 31 States and D.C.

CRC Forms Chapters in Louisiana and Washington, D.C.

Haber

Banner

Nesbitt

Louisiana is the newest state to have a CRC chapter. Nancy Haber, a nurse and stepmother, who has a child from a previous marriage, and a child from her marriage to Bob Haber, is heading CRC's new Louisiana chapter. "Louisiana has a strong presumption for joint custody, and we want to do our best to support that law and enhance it," said Haber.

CRC has long wanted a chapter in the nation's capital, and one has now been formed by Frank W. Banner, Jr., associate chapter director Lynn Nesbitt, and other members. The chapter recently established a mentoring program for the children at the Ft. Lincoln community school in Washington, D.C., and obtained the contribution of 40 computers from the U.S. Justice Department for classroom use.

CRC of California has formed regional chapters in various California cities, thanks to state coordinator Patricia Gehlen, a schoolteacher and grandmother, and Will Brown, state CRC president, who is a public affairs consultant in Texas and California.

Terry Sternaman, a former Marine who wears a self-made Sesame Street cookie monster costume to entertain children in hospitals, is heading CRC's chapter in southern Michigan. He has three children and three grandchildren. Barbara Toth continues to head CRC's chapter in northern Michigan.

Kevin O'Brien, who headed

(Continued on page 18)

Inside CRC

New Suite; More Space

CRC has obtained a larger office, in the same building at 220 I Street N.E., Washington, D.C.

We are now in Suite 140, where we have extra office space–1,100 square feet, instead of the previous 800 square feet.

We have this added space at no increase in rent, thanks to reshuffling the landord did in the building to satisfy the needs of various tenants.

Write to us, at Suite 140!

Lynn Nesbitt, a former secretary in the CRC office, has returned as our secretary. Lynn is adding a lot to CRC!

Donors are Appreciated

CRC thanks everyone who contributed to CRC in past federal government charity drives; we hope you will also consider us in the charity drive that takes place this Fall.

CRC is listed as number 1513 in the Children's Charities of America listing, which is part of the Independent Charities of America. We also thank those who contribute to CRC in the Washington, D.C., and San Francisco (Bay Area) United Way campaigns.

We also thank those who contribute to CRC through their United Way in some other part of the country, where we are not listed, but where employers sometimes allow employees to designate CRC.

CRC also appreciates all those who contribute to CRC through the Global Focus credit card campaign run by MBNA America Bank, in Newark, Delaware. CRC depends on volunteer help and contributions for its existence.

If you wish to make your tax-deductible contribution direct to CRC, send it to CRC, 220 I Street, Suite 140, Washington, D.C. 20002.

CRC on Internet

Interest in CRC on the Internet is growing. Bruce Kaskubar, CRC coordinator in Minnesota has placed CRC on the Internet Worldwide Web. For those of you with a browser, the home page's URL is http://www.vix.com/crc/ Bruce would like to field questions from individuals, as well as members of other groups who are interested in CRC.

CRC's e-mail address, which we received in June, 1996, thanks to Bruce's work, is crcdc@erols.com

Intellectual Property Protection

Charlie Ruggiero, who obtained trademark protection for the name and logo "Children's Rights Council" and the name and logo for our newsletter "Speak Out for Children" is a specialist in trademark, patent, copyright, and licensing law. He is a partner with Ohlandt, Greeley and Ruggiero, 1 Landmark Square, Suite 903, Stamford, CT 06901, phone (203) 327-6067.

Beat the Tax Man: Contribute to CRC

If you wish to consider leaving a bequest or property to CRC, please let CRC know of your generosity.

Contact your accountant or tax advisor on the best way to structure any such bequest.

Or contact CRC, and we can suggest an accountant or tax advisor to assist you.

National Affiliate Organizations and Chapters

National Affiliate Organizations

Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC)
Jennifer Isham, president
P.O. 77. Box 27417
Houston, TX 77227-7418
1-800-457-MWOC
Joint membership in MW/OC and CRC: $35.00 a year

Parents Without Partners (PWP)
Linda Napolitano, president
401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
312-644-6610
Members of PWP join CRC for only $20.00 a year.

Stepfamily Association of America (SAA)
Judith L. Bauersfeld, Ph.D., president
215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 212
Lincoln, Nebraska 66505
(402) 477-7837
Joint membership in SAA and CRC: $35.00 for the first year
TELL THE ABOVE ORGANIZATION THAT YOU WANT A JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN THEIR GROUP **AND** IN CRC

CRC Chapters

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For development of chapters in states:
* **west of the Mississippi** that do not yet have any CRC chapters, contact chapter coordinator Eric Anderson, 12103 Scribe Drive, Austin, TX 78759, phone (512) 836-6621
* **east of the Mississippi** that do not yet have CRC chapters, contact chapter coordinator Michael Ewing, 3029 Yakima Road, Chesapeake, VA 23325, phone (804) 543-5993, fax -1261.

Ask Messrs. Ewing or Anderson for a copy of the 100-page CRC booklet that explains everything you need to know about affiliation. Enclose $10.00 for photocopying and postage.

To form additional chapters in states that already have one or more chapters, contact the state coordinator or existing state chapter head listed above.

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CRC In 31 States!

(Continued from page 16)

CRC's chapter in Cincinnati, is also the new head of CRC's Kentucky chapter. Kevin succeeds Bradley Bell, who resigned because of family commitments.

Richard Covino, an emergency medical technical for the city of Boston, is starting a CRC chapter in the Boston area. Richard is being assisted by Benjamin Sawyer, Margaret Engle, and others.

If you live in a state where there is a CRC chapter, we urge you to join the chapter. In this way, you will be networking with a chapter and national CRC to reform custody laws and attitudes around the country. By becoming a member of the chapter, you also become a member of national CRC.

Note: CRC's name is protected by federal trademark law.

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Stand for Children

(Continued from page 14)

across Memorial Bridge from Arlington, Virginia, to the Lincoln Memorial, the site of the rally.

The interns were seen on C-Span. Other CRC interns manned a booth at the rally, where CRC gave away newsletters and other materials about CRC. We also sold some materials.

CRC emphasizes the family more than the main sponsor of the rally, the Children's Defense Fund, but we thought it important to be part of a rally called on behalf of children.

Here are *some* SPECIAL ADDITIONS to the

Children's Rights Council

1996

CATALOG OF RESOURCES for parents and professionals

The CRC Catalog lists more than 100 books, written reports, audio-cassettes, model bills, and gifts for children. Members can receive additional free copies of the catalog by contacting CRC. Non-members can order one for $1. write to: CRC, 220 I Street, NE, Suite 140, Washington, DC 20002-4362.

Putting Kids First

By Michael L. Oddenino

CRC's General Counsel

The book offers a children's Bill of Rights, a sample Custody Agreement, and Ten Suggestions for keeping kids out of post-divorce conflicts. A must for people interested in child and family welfare!

153 pages, illustrated, hardback, $16.95

And also order the book entitled **Healing Hearts, by Elizabeth Hickey, M.S.WW. and Elizabeth Dalton, J.D. $19.95**

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The CRC Book – *"The Best Parent is Both Parents"*

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Healing from Divorce: Healing Wounded Hearts

by Elizabeth Hickey

A new video designed to stimulate communication between divorced parent and child. Meant to be watched in the privacy of your own home. About 50 minutes. **$19.95**

Order:

A Hole in My Heart
By Claire Berman, 286 pages, softback, $10.00

Fathers Rights
The Source Book for Dealing with the Child Support System
By John Conine, 220 pages, hardback, $19.00

Don't Blame Me, Daddy
False Accusations of Child Sexual Abuse
By Dean Tong, 214 pages, softback, $12.00

Leslee Newman, an attorney in California who has expertise in move-away issues, will give a free 15 to 30 minute consultation to CRC members on move-away issues. Phone Leslee Newman at (714)282-1515

New CRC Directory

The 6th edition of CRC's "Parenting International Directory" is now available. The directory lists about 1,200 organizations in the U.S. and abroad involved in custody reform, mediation, parenting, and financial child support.

Order your copy of the sixth edition in hardcopy or on disc. IBM 3 1/2" HD disc will be provided unless 5 1/4" HD or DD disc is specifically requested.

The price is $12.00 for CRC members, and $15.00 for non-members.

Send any additions, corrections or deletions for the Directory to Paul Robinson, 3702 Melrose Avenue, Forestville, MD 20747, or by fax (301) 568-5812. Paul Robinson helped to prepare the directory for CRC.

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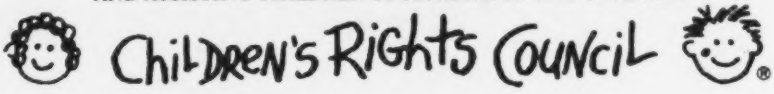

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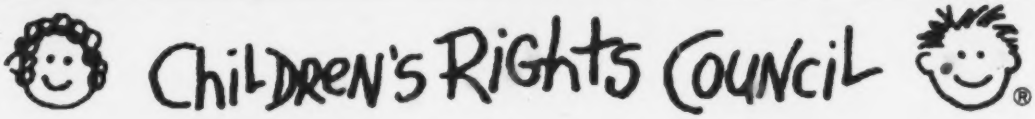

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